CHAPTER 1

PILLARS OF ISLAM AND MORAL VALUES

Purpose of Prophet hood -- Perfection of Morals
The holy Prophet has stated the foremost purpose of his being sent down in this world and the method of his call to the people in these words:

"I have been sent only for the purpose of perfecting good morals."

(AI-Muta)

That great message which has left an indelible impression on the history of life, and for propagating which and for bringing people under whose influence Prophet Muhammed (p.b.u.h.) worked ceaselessly. Its purpose was nothing else but to strengthen the moral character of the people so that the world of beauty and perfection may be illuminated before their eyes and they may try to achieve it consciously and with knowledge.
Worshipping has been made compulsory in Islam, and it has been included in the basic pillars of faith. But the Islamic forms of worship are not some sort of mystic exercises that link men with some unknown, mysterious being, and which subject men to perform useless acts and meaningless movements. All the Islamic compulsory forms of worship are designed as exercises and training to enable people to acquire correct morals and habits and to live righteously, and to adhere to these virtues till the end, whatever be the changes in their circumstances.

Prayer prevents commitment of Evil

Salat (prayer) is a compulsory form of worship, which is like an exercise towards which man is attracted with interest and willingness. He offers it continually, so that his life may be free from all diseases and the body may be healthy and strong. The holy Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet both are the open proofs of these realities. When Allah commanded the compulsory prayers to be established, He stated its wisdom in this way:

"Prayer prohibits obscenity and evil."

To keep away from evil, wickedness and to purify from bad deeds are also realities of the prayer. In a Hadith Qudsi it is stated:

"I accept the prayers of the person who adopts the policy of humility with it on account of My greatness, obliges My creatures, does not insist on sinning against Me, spends his day in remembering Me, and is kind to the poor, travellers, weak and the suffering people."

Zakat is a means of purification

Zakat has been made compulsory on the eligible 'scheduled' (sahibe Nisab) persons. It is Dot merely a tax that is collected from the pockets of the people, but its foremost purpose is to sow the seeds of kindness. sympathy and benevolence, and to provide a chance of introduction among the various sections of the society and to establish the relationship of love and friendliness. The purpose of paying Zakat has been stated in the Quran in the following words :
"0 Prophet I Take charity from their property so that it may clean them and purify them."

-(Tauba.. 103)

To ciean the self of the wor1d1y impurities and to raise the standard of the society to the heights of decency and purity are the wisdom behind the levy of Zakat.
For this reason the Prophet has taken it in a very wide sense, and to pay Zakat has been made compulsory for every eligible Muslim. The Prophet has said:
"To smile in the company of your brother is charity. To command to do good deeds and to prevent others from doing evil is charity. To guide a person in a place where he can go astray is charity. To remove troublesome

things like thorns and bones from the road is charity. To pour water from your jug into the jug of your brother is charity. To guide a person with defective vision is charity for you."

-(Bukhari)

The environment of desert and the Bedouin life-an environment which had its basis on internal bickering and fights-in such an environment the teachings of Islam were presented to the world and they show what aims and purpose these teachings had, and it shows where these teachings led the Arabs in that dark and dismal environment.

Fasting is a stepping stone to righteousness

Similarly Islam has made fasting compulsory. But it is not envisaged that men should keep away from their carnal desires and other prohibited things for a fixed period only. The Prophet has said:

"Fasting is Dot the name of merely keeping away from eating and drinking, but it is keeping away from wicked and obscene things. If in the state of fasting, someone abuses you or picks up a quarrel with you, say: "I am fasting."

Quran states the purpose of the imposition of fasting in these words:

"Fasting has been made compulsory for you, as it was made compulsory for those (followers of earlier prophets) who preceded you, so that you may become righteous."

(Baqarah.. 183)

Hajj is a compulsory pilgrimage to weaken the love for the world

Sometimes man thinks that to travel to the holy places and to perform pilgrimage, which has been made compulsory for every rich Muslim, and which is included in the basic pillars of Islam, is merely a form of worship that has no relation with the world of morality and character. This is a clear misunderstanding. Giving commands about this compulsory worship, Allah states:

"The months of Hajj are well-known. In these months whoever intends to perform Hajj should no~ indulge in sexual act, wicked act, and fighting during the Hajj. Whatever righteous ac, you will perform will be known to A11ah. Take with you provision for the journey (for Hajj), and the best provision is righteousness. So fear me, 0 men of understanding I"

-(Baqarah : 197)

This is merely the main outline of the forms of worship which are well known and generally practised in Islam and they are its basic pillars. They show us what a deep relationship is there between religion and morality and how strong and lasting is this relationship.

How varying are these forms of worship in their spirit and appearance from one another, but in those aim and purpose how close they are, which the holy Prophet declared his main objective.

Therefore, salat (prayer), saum (fasting), zakat, Hajj and other forms of worship like these are the stepping stones for real perfection, and are the means of cleanliness and purity that make life secure and magnificent. On account of high attributes and noble qualities that are the inalienable parts and the consequences of these forms of worship, they have been given a very high and important place in Allah's religion.

If these forms of worship do not purify the hearts of men, if they do not nourish best qualities in those who observe them, and if they do not improve and make firm the relationship .between Allah and His slaves, then there is nothing left for men but destruction and devastation.

Allah says:

"Surely, he who appears before his Lord as a criminal, there is hell for him, in which he will neither die nor will he live. And he who will appear before Him as a faithful, who has performed good deeds-for all such people there are high positions, ever green paradise,beneath which canals will be flowing; they will live in them for ever. This is the reward for him who adopts purity."

(Taha.. 74-76)

CHAPTER 2.

WEAKNESS OF MORALS-PROOF OF LACK OF FAITH

Faith Is Imperfect without morality
Faith is such a power that it keeps men away from low attributes and mean acts, and encourages him to achieve high attributes and clean morals. That is why whenever Allah called his slaves towards virtue or whenever He wanted them to hate evil, He declared it as an essential requirement of the Faith in their hearts. For example when He; in Surah Taubah, commands men to adopt righteousness and to speak truth, He addresses them as

"***0 you who have faith" (or "O you who believe"):"0 you, who have faith I Fear Allah and be withthe truthful people."***

(Taubah.. 119)

Allah's Messenger has nicely explained it that when faith is firm and belief is strong, then strong and lasting moral will be developed, and if the moral character is low then faith will accordingly be weak.
A man, who is immodest and ill-mannered and who adopts bad habits without caring for others, is like the person about whom the holy Prophet has said:
"Modesty and faith are twins. One who gives up one has to lose the other too."
Once the Prophet passed by an Ansari who was scolding his brother about his immodesty. The Prophet advised him to let him go as modesty was a branch of faith.
A man who harasses his neighbour and makes him suffer any kind of damage is called cruel and stonehearted by the religion. In this connection the decision of the Prophet is :
"By God, he cannot be a Momin ; by God, he cannot be a Momin; by God, he cannot be a Momin. He was asked: 'who' 1 He answered: 'He from whose misdeeds his neighbour is not safe.' "

-(Bukhari)

The holy Prophet advises his companions to keep away from the talk that is trash, the acts that are wicked, and the deeds that are senseless. He says:
"A person who believes in Allah and the Here after should speak about good things or else should keep quiet." -(Bukhari)

In this way through the truth of faith and by means of its perfection noble qualities are nurtured and developed and they are guarded and kept secure till they bear fruits.

Rows disrupted, hearts sad, prayers tasteless
However, you will also find such people, who will be calling themselves Muslims, yet they will be lazy in offering compulsory prayers, and will be posing in the public as if they are very keen on establishing these prayers. But they will not lag behind at the same time in acting in such a way that will be contrary to the demands of the noble character and perfect faith.
Such people have been warned by the holy Prophet and the Ummah has been asked to be careful of them.
A man who commits the mistake of performing the various forms of worship without understanding their significance can only be a man who had not understood the spirit of the worship or has been unable to rise to that standard.
Many times even a child can copy the movements of salat and is able to repeat what is recited during the prayer. Sometimes an actor also offers prayer with all humility and concentration. and performs all the necessary rites.
But these kinds of movements do not benefit belief or meet the purpose. There is only one way of offering prayers in the best manner or performing other forms of worship that will never bring out wrong results, and that is : high moral character. Any person who has this attribute in him, his prayer is useful. But one who is deprived of this attribute, his worshipping is useless.
It is narrated by Imam Ahmed:
"One person asked the Prophet: '0 Messenger of Allah a certain woman is very famous for her prayers, fasting and many charities, but she talks rudely with her neighbours. Tell me, what will be her fate ?' He replied that she would go to Hell. Then that person asked: '0 Messenger of Allah ! Another woman does not do much by way

of prayers and fasting; gives pieces of cheese in charity and does not harm her neighbours.' He replied: 'She is of the Paradise. "

This reply gives an idea of the high value attached to good character. It also shows that charity is a collective prayer whose benefit reaches the society. For this reason there is no room for any reduction in them. As salat and fasting are apparently individual forms of worship, a little relaxation-to a very little extent-is allowed in not making very elaborate arrangements about them.
The holy Prophet did not merely answer a casual question that explains the relationship between morality and the religion, shows its connection with the correct forms of worship, and forms the basis of reform and improvement in the world and salvation in the next world.
The problem of morality was much more important. It was necessary that he should have continually provided guidance to his followers. He should have persisted in giving good advice to them so that its importance takes root in the mind and heart and it becomes quite clear that faith, goodness and morality are all dependent on each other. They are connected with each other and none can separate them.

Who Is poor ?

One day the Prophet asked his dear companions whether they knew who was poor. They answered that poor was one who had no dirham or dinar (money)' He said:"In my Ummah, the poor is that man who would appear on the Day of the Judgment before Allah; he had offered prayer; he had paid Zakat ; he had observed fast; but he would have abused somebody, he would have falsely accused some one; he would have unauthorisedly taken some one else's property; he would have murdered some one; would have hit some body. All his virtues would be given to his victims. If his virtues are finished before his wicked deeds are finished, then the errors and sins of the victims would be given to him and he would be thrown into the Hell."

(Muslim)

Such a man is really poor. His condition is like that trader who has goods worth one thousand rupees but he is a debtor for two thousand rupees. How can such a man be called rich?
A religious man who offers certain prayers or performs certain forms of worship, but even after that performs certain evil deeds, behaves rudely with the people. treats poor and helpless people cruelly, how then such a man will be called righteous?
The Prophet has explained by quoting an example. He said that the best moral character melts errors like water and bad morals spoil man's record as vinegar spoils honey.

Identification of hypocrite

When wickedness is nourished in the self, and the loss caused by it has become manifest and the danger has increased, then that man has come out of his religion like a nude who has come out of his garments. At that time his claim of righteousness or faith would be false.
What will be the value of religiousness without good morality ! How is it possible that a man should belong to Allah and at the same he should be a victim of corruption ?
This relationship between faith and morality is clearly shown in the hadith of the holy Prophet :
"The man who has these three habits is a hypocrite even if be observes fast, offers prayers. performs umra (pilgrimage), and calls himself a Muslim: when be talks he speaks untruth, when he makes a promise he does not keep it, and when he is given something in trust, he commits dishonesty."

-(Muslim).

In another tradition, he has said:
"There are three signs of a hypocrite: when he talks he speaks untruth, when he makes a promise he does not keep it, and when he makes a contract he deceives, although he may be offering prayers, observing fast and calling himself a Mus1im."

He has also said:
"There are four habits, in whosoever they are ound, he will be a complete hypocrite. If anyone of these habits is found in a man, he will have one habit of disruption till he gives it up. when something is given to him in trust he

commits dishonesty, when he talks he tells lies, when he makes a contract be deceives, and when be quarrels he starts abusing.

-(Bukhari).

CHAPTER 3

AN IDEAL PERSONALITY

Prophet's Moral Teachings
These teachings show that Islam had come to illuminate the lives of the people with the light of virtue and good manners, to create in them brightness of character, and to fill their laps with the pearls of good conduct. It made the stages that came in the process of achieving this great objective as an important part of the prophet hood.
Similarly it declared all attempts to create disruption in these stages as an expulsion from the religion and equivalent to throwing away the yoke of faith from one's neck.
The position of morality is not like that of the means of pleasures and luxuries, from which indifference may be possible. But morality is the name of the principles of life which the religion must adopt and must care for the respect of its standard-bearers.
Islam has enumerated all these virtues and principles and has encouraged its followers to make them parts of their lives, one after another.
If we collect all the sayings of the holy Prophet about the importance of good moral character, then a voluminous book will be prepared, about which many of the great reformers will be ignorant.

Before we enumerate these virtues and state their details, it will be proper if we quote some examples of how strongly and emphatically Islam has called upon the people to adopt good moral character.
Usama bin Shareek says:
"We were sitting in the presence of the Messenger of Allah so quietly as if birds were perched on our heads. Nobody had the courage to open his mouth. In the meanwhile some people came and asked: "Amongst the slaves of God who is the dearest to Him." The Prophet replied: "One who has the best moral character."

-(lbn Haban)

Another tradition has it:
"They asked what is the best thing given to man ?" He replied: "Best moral character."

-(Tirmizi)

The Prophet was asked: "
Which Muslim has the perfect faith ?" He answered: "He who has the best moral character."

(Tibrani)

Abdullah bin' Amar has reported:
"**I have heard the Prophet as saying: 'Should I not tell you who amongst you is the most likeable person to me 1 And who will be the nearest to me on the Day of the Judgment l' He repeated this question twice or thrice. The people requested him to tell them about such a person. He said 'He who amongst you has the best moral character.' "**

(Ahmed)

In another hadith, he has said:
"On the Day of the Judgement there will be nothing weightier in the balance of a momin than the goodness of character. Allah dislikes an obscene and a rude talker and the bearer of a good moral character reaches to the level of the observer of the prayer and fasting, on account of his character."

(Imam Ahmed)

There would be nothing surprising if such teachings were to come from a philosopher who was busy in his campaign of moral-reform. But the great surprise is that these teachings come from a man who strived for establishing a great new faith, when all other religions turn their attention first only towards the performance of worship and such other religious rites.
The last Prophet gave a call for the performance of various Corms of worship and for the establishment of such a government that was involved in a long-drawn war with its large number of enemies. Inspite of the expansion of his religion and the immense increase in the various tasks of his followers, the Prophet informs them of the fact that on the Day of the Judgment there will be nothing weightier in their balance than their good moral character, then definitely this reality is not hidden from him that in Islam the value of morality is very high The fact is that if religion, is the name

of good conduct between man and man, then on the other hand in its spiritual sense it is also the name of the best relationship between man and his God, and in both these aspects there is the same reality.
There are many religions which give this glad tiding that you may embrace any belief, your sins will be washed away and offering fixed prayers of any religion will cancel your mistakes.

But Islam does not believe in this. According to it, these benefits will be available only when the axis and centre of belief is a conscious step towards virtue and payment of the compulsory dues, and when the proposed worship can become the real source of washing away the sins and generating the real perfection. In other words evil can be removed by those virtues which man makes his own and by which he is able to reach high and lofty standards. The holy Prophet has very forcefully emphasised these valuable principles so that the Ummah may understand it very clearly that the value of morality may not go down in its eyes and the importance of mere forms and shapes may not increase.
Hazrat Anas has reported:
"Allah's Messenger has said: 'A slave achieves, by means of the goodness of his character, great position and high honour in the Hereafter, though he may be weak in matters of worship; but on account of his wickedness of character he is thrown in the lowest recesses of the Hell." -

(Tibrani).

Hazrat Ayesha narrates:
"I have heard the Prophet as saying: 'Momin, by goodness of his character, achieves the high position of the one who observes fast and offers prayers."

-(Abu Dawood).

Ibn Umar is reported to have narrated: "I have heard the Prophet as saying :
'A Muslim who observes moderation in matter of worship, on account of the goodness of his character and decency achieves the position of that man who observes fast and recites Allah's verses during prayers in the night."

-(Ahmed)

Abu Huraira has quoted the Prophet as saying:
"A Momin's nobility is his religiousness, his tolerance is his intelligence, and his lineage is his goodness of character."

-(Hakim)

Abu Zar has narrated: "Successful is the man who had purified his heart for faith, kept his heart on the right lines, his tongue was truthful, his self was content, and his nature was on the right path."

-(Ibn Haban)

The Prophet's Excellent Example

Mere teachings and commands of Do's and Don'ts do not form the foundation of good moral character in a society, because only these things are not sufficient for developing these good qualities in the human nature; a teacher may merely order to do such and such things and not to do such and such things. and the society becomes a moralist society. The teachings of good conduct which is fruitful requires long training and constant watchfulness.
The training cannot be on the right lines if the example before the society is not such that commands full confidence, because a person having a bad moral character cannot leave a good impression on his surroundings.
The best training can be expected only from such a man whose personality, by the force of its morality, would create a scene of admiration in the beholders. They would sing praises of his nobility and feel the irresistible urge to benefit from the example of his life. The world would spontaneously f~1 the urge to follow his footsteps.
For nourishing and developing more and more excellent good character among his followers it is necessary that the leader must possess higher and nobler character and attributes than his followers.
The holy Prophet himself was the best example of the good moral character, to emulate which he was giving a call to his followers. Before advising them to adopt a moral life by giving sermons and counsels, he was sowing the seeds of morality among his followers by actually living that kind of life.
Abdullah Ibn Amar says:
"The Messenger of Allah (p. b. u. h.) was neither ill-mannered nor rude. He used to say that the better people among you are those who are best in their moral character."

-(Bukhari)

Anas says: "I served the holy Prophet for ten years. He never said 'Uf' (expressing dissatisfaction), nor did he ever ask

(Muslim)

It is also reported by him: “My mother used to hold the Prophet's hand and used to take him wherever she wanted. If any person used to come before him and shake his hand, the Prophet never used to draw away his hand from the other person's hands till the latter drew away his hands, and he never used to turn away his face from that person till the latter himself turned away his face. And in the meetings he was never seen squatting in such a way that his knees were protruding further than his fellow-squatters.”

-(Tirmizi)

Hazrat Ayesha says: “
If there were two alternatives, the holy Prophet used to adopt the easiest alternative, provided there was no sin in it. If that work were sinful, then he used to run away farthest from it. The prophet did not take any personal revenge from any body. Yes, if Allah's command were to be disobeyed, then his wrath was to be stirred. Allah's Messenger did not beat anybody with his own hands. neither his wife nor a servant. Yes, he used to fight in the wars in the cause of Allah.”

-(Muslim)

Anas has narrated:
“I was walking with the Prophet. He had wrapped a thick chadar round his body. One Arab pulled the chadar so forcefully that a part of his shoulder could be seen by me, and I was perturbed by this forceful pulling of the chadar. The Arab then said: '0 Muhammed! Give me some of my share from the property which Allah has given you.' The Prophet turned towards him and laughed, and gave orders for a donation being given to him.”

-(Bukhari)

Hazrat Ayesha has reported that Allah's Messenger has said:
“Allah is soft-hearted. He likes soft heartedness. And the reward which He gives for soft-heartedness does not give for hardness, nay, such a reward He does not give for any thing.”

-(Muslim)

In another tradition it is stated: **“Softness in whichever thing it may be, will make that thing beautiful. And from whichever thing softness is taken out, it will become ugly.”**
Jarir narrates that the Prophet has said:
“The reward which Allah gives for soft-heartedness He does not give it for folly; and when Allah makes any slave His favourite, He gives him softness. Those families that are devoid of softness become deprived of every virtue.”

-(Tibrani)

Abdullah bin Harith has reported that he did not see anybody smiling more than the Messenger of Allah. -

(Tinnizi)

Hazrat Ayesha was asked what did Prophet do at home?
She replied:” He used to be in the service of his home people; and when the time of prayer came he used to perform ablutions and go out for prayer.”

-(Muslim)

Anas has narrated:
“Allah's Messenger had the best manners of all the persons. I had an adopted brother, whose name was Abu Umair. He had a sick sparrow, who was called 'Nagheer'. Allah's Messenger used to be playful with him and ask him : '0 Abu Umair! what has happened to your Nagheer'. “ -

(Bukhari)

Of the habits and traits of the Prophet one trait was very well known that he was extremely philanthropic. He was never miserly in anything. He was very brave and courageous. He never turned away from Truth. He was justice. loving. In his own decision he never committed any excesses or injustice. In his whole life he was truthful and an honest trustee.

The same Quran, the same Criterion, the same Yasin, the same Taha

Allah has commanded all the Muslims to follow the excellent habits and the best traits of the Prophet and to take guidance from the holy life of the holy Messenger.
“Surely there is in the person of Allah's .messenger an excellent example for you-for every person who has hope in Allah and the Hereafter and remember, Allah, reciting His name many times.”

-(Ahzab: 21)

Qazi A 'yaz says that the Prophet was the most excellent-mannered, most philanthropic and the bravest of all. One night

cause). They saw that the Prophet was coming from that direction. He had rushed before all others to find out what was the trouble. He was riding the horse of Abu Talha, without a saddle, and a sword was hanging from his neck, and he was comforting the people not to be afraid saying there was nothing to worry.

Hazrat Ali says that in the battles when fighting started, we used to worry much about the Prophet, because nobody was nearer to the enemy in the fighting than the Prophet.

Jabir bin Abdullah says that whenever anything was requested of him, he never said: No.

Hazrat Khadija had told him when he was first blessed with the Divine Revelation:
"You carry the loads of the weak people, you earn for the poor, and help a person if any trouble comes to him in following the Truth."

Once he received seventy thousand *dirhams*. They were placed before him on the mat. He distributed them standing. He did not refuse a single beggar till he finished the entire amount.
A man approached him and requested for something. He said: "At present I do not have anything, buy something in my name, and when we will get some money we will pay for it."
Hazrat Umar stated: "Allah has not made it compulsory for you to do a thing on which you have no power or control." This saddened the Prophet.
One Ansari said: "O Messenger of Allah! Spend and be not afraid of the straitened circumstances imposed by Allah." The Prophet smiled and his face shone resplendently. He said: "I have been commanded to do this only."

The holy Prophet used to love his companions. He did not hate them. He respected every respectable man from any other nation, and he used to appoint him as a responsible officer over them. He used to be in search of his companions and gave them their shares. No companion thought that any other person was more respectable in the Prophet's eye than the companion himself.
Any person who adopted his companionship or anybody who came to him for his need, he used to advise him to be patient, till he was satisfied. If anybody asked anything from him, he gave it to him or else talked to him so lovingly that he came back satisfied. The river of his kindness was flowing for every body. For his companions he was a guardian, and in matters of Truth all were equal in his eyes.
He was good-looking, decent, humble and soft hearted. He was not a narrow-minded and a hard person. Quarrelling was not his habit. He never spoke obscene words. To condemn others or to praise some one excessively was beyond the pale of his character. He expressed indifference towards unnecessary things, but he was never given to pessimism.

Hazrat Ayesha says that there was none who possessed a better moral character than the Prophet. Whenever his friends or his home people called him, he readily responded.
Jarir bin Abdullah says: "Since the time I became a Muslim, the Prophet did not prevent me from entering (the house) ; whenever he looked at me, he smiled."
He used to exchange repartees with his companions, mix up with them freely, and tried to be nearer to them.
He played with their children and took them in his lap.
Invitation from free men, male or female slaves, or poor persons were acceptable to him. He visited the ailing and invalid persons in the far-flung areas of Medina. He accepted the excuses of the really helpless people.
Anas says that if any person who whispered anything into his ears, he never removed his ear from his mouth unless the whisperer himself withdrew his mouth. Whenever anybody held his hand, he never tried to withdraw his hand unless the other man withdrew his. He always used to be the first to salute anyone who met him or to be first to shake hands with his companions. He never stretched his legs in the midst of his companions so that they may not be inconvenienced.
Whoever cam: to him was duly respected by him. Many times he used to spread his cloth for the visitor, and used to place the cushion which was in his use behind the visitor's back. If the visitor were reluctant to lit on the cloth, he used to insist.
He gave new family names to his companions. In their honour, he used to call them by beautiful names. He never used to interrupt anybody's talk till the speaker either stopped or stood up.
Anas narrates that if anybody brought a present to the Prophet he used to ask him to take it to a particular house

Hazrat Ayesha says: “I was not jealous of any woman, nor did I feel any ill will towards Khadija, as I used to hear of her repeatedly from the Prophet. If any goat were slaughtered, he used to send it to her friends' house as a present. Once her sister asked for permission to come in. He was very pleased to see her.
A woman came to him and spoke endearingly of Khadija and asked questions about her lovingly. When she went away, he said: “This woman used to come during Khadija's time. Good relationship is a sign of faith”.

He treated his relatives kindly, but he did not give them preference over better persons.
Abu Qatawa has reported that when a delegation of Najashi came to the Prophet, he rose for serving them. His companions told him that they were sufficient to serve them. He replied:
“They had honoured our companions, therefore I personally want to serve them.”
Abu Usama has narrated that once the Messenger of Allah went among his companions leaning on a cane and his companions stood up. The Prophet said: “Do not stand up. Do not adopt the system of these Non Arabs who stand up to pay respect to one another.”
He said:“I am a slave of Allah; I eat as other people eat, and I sit as other people sit.” When he rode a mule, he allowed some one else to ride behind him. He used to visit poor invalids. He allowed the beggars to sit in his meetings. He mixed up freely with his companions. Where the meeting was over, he used to sit there.
The Prophet once performed Hajj on a cheap Kajawa on the back of a camel on which an old, torn chadar was spread, whose cost could be at the most four dirhams. He said: “0 Allah I This is my Hajj in which there is neither hypocrisy nor show.”
When Makkah was conquered and the Muslim soldiers entered the city, the Prophet was riding a camel and his head was bowed down in humility, so much 80 that it appeared that his head was touching a part of the kajawa.
He was of a quiet nature. He never talked without necessity. And if anybody talked with a wry face, he used to be indifferent to him and ignored him.
His smile was his laughter. His talk was straight and direct, in which there was no exce~s. His companions, in his honour and in following him, considered it sufficient to smile in his presence.
His meetings manifested a spirit of tolerance, trusteeship, honesty, virtue and righteousness. Voices were not raised there and no back-biting was allowed therein.
Whenever he opened his mouth to speak, his companions used to keep silent, as if birds were perched on their heads.
When he walked, it was with a balanced gait. There was neither fright nor haste in his gait, nor was there laziness.
Ibn Abi Hala says: “His silence was on account of tolerance, far-sightedness, estimation and thinking and contemplating.”
Hazrat Ayesha says that he talked in such a way that if anybody wanted to count the words, he could do so.
The Messenger of Allah liked fragrance and used perfumes many times.
The world was presented to him with all her allurements and amusements. Victories were won by his armies, but he was indifferent to luxuries and pleasures. He died in such a condition that his armour was pledged to a Jew.

CHAPTER 4

BELONGING AlSO TO PARADISE, BELONGING AlSO TO HELL

First Target-Reform of Self
Like other divine religions Islam also keeps the reform of man's self as the first item in its programme of reforms.
It makes the human self as the first target of its efforts and sows the seeds of the Islamic teachings in its depths, so that self and training become inseparable.
The teachings of the Prophets lasted till the Doomsday and around them gathered the group of faithful people. Its secret was this that the self of man was the objective of all its work and it was the axis of all its activities. Their teachings were not like something externally pasted that they could be separated from men in the movements of their daily life. These were not like the paint or varnish that could be worn out by the passage of time. They had imbibed their principles and teachings into the depths of man's hearts, which had turned into a very strong power that could keep it safe from the wickedness of men's nature and could rule over their decisions. Many times some divine religions raised objections against the society and its structure, and governments and its nature, and also presented remedies for the ills which had appeared in these quarters.
Inspite of this, the nature of all the divine religious has been this that they kept righteous self as the basis of an their programmes of reform, and considered firm and strong moral character as a permanent guarantee for the establishment and upkeep of every civilization.
But this does not mean that the importance of those who are striving for the construction of a better government and society is being reduced, or that their efforts are considered to be less important.. No. Not at all. Here an attempt is being made to make the people realize the value of the reform of man's self for the safety of life and for the security of healthy and virtuous living. .
The self that has become wicked can only spread disruption and disorder in the system of government, and can make use of the enforcement of the laws of that system for meeting its mean and wicked objectives. But a purified and noble self will perform the responsible task of stitching the tears in the garment of the environment and repairing it. It will try to enhance society's greatness and decency. It will consider it its responsibility to bring in regularity in the use of power, and to remove all kinds of defects from the government.
It is like a judge. If he is well trained and decent, he can reform the defects of the law by his selfless decisions and just orders. But a cruel and unkind judge can show indifference to the correct commands and authorities. Same is the condition of the self, when it is confronted with the ideas and views of the world, and personal likes and interests.
That is why the reform of the self is the first foundation pillar of the supremacy of virtue in this life.
If no attention is paid to the reform of the individuals (selves), this world becomes the dominion of the dark forces, men's present and future will be ruled by corruption. That is why Allah says:
"Verily, Allah will never change the condition of a people until they change it themselves. But when Allah wills a people's punishment, there can be no turning it back, nor will they find, beside Him any to protect."

(Ra'ad.. 11)

Stating the cause of the corrupt communities, Allah says:
"Like (the deeds of) the people of Pharaoh and of those before them; they rejected the signs of Allah and Allah punished them for their crimes; for Allah is Strong and Strict in punishment " because Allah will never change the Grace which He has bestowed on a people until they change what is in their (own) souls,"

-(Anfal ..52-53)

From the viewpoint of reform and training, Islam considers this matter in its two aspects:
The first aspect is this: Every self has a decent and pure nature in itself which rushes towards righteousness and good, and feels happy on getting it. It hates wickedness and evil. It becomes sad and sorry on committing it. It sees the extension and development of its existence and the health of its life in truth and justice.

With this there is its second aspect also. Every self has in it exciting emotions and Satanic inclinations, which turn it away from the right path. They present harmful acts in a glamorous way and throw it into the pit of meanness and lowliness. We are not interested in talking a survey of the principles and elementary of these harmful inclination from a historical point of view so that it may be ascertained whether these emotions or desires enter the human nature from outside or whether they are ingrained in the nature itself. We are concerned with the fact that both these conditions are found in men, which are locked in mutual struggle for attaining leadership for guiding man's life. And whatever kind of leadership man accepts decides his final destination.
Allah says:
"By the soul, and the proportion and the order given to it; and its enlightenment as to its wrong and its right; truly he succeeds who purifies it, and he fails who corrupts it."

-(Shams: 7-10)

The achievement of Islam is this that it helps man fully, so that he may be able to make his nature strong and firm, he may make its rays more bright and more illuminating, and in its guidance and leadership may successfully complete his long journey of life.
Similarly it also prepares man to be free from the ways of wickedness and the inciting of the devil, because these try to mislead him and turn him away from the right path, and finally cause him to fall from his high rank.

Islam is Religion of Nature

Islam has called itself a 'Natural Religion' which is free from all these impurities :
" So (O Prophet) set your face steadily and truly to the faith. (Establish) Allah's nature on which He has framed mankind. There is no change in what Allah has created; that is the standard religion; but most among mankind do not understand."

-(Rum: 30)

The function of the eye is to see until there is some disturbance in it. The ear hears the sound till it becomes deaf.
The function of the nature is to follow the right path, and to rush towards it with such alacrity as the water rushes down from a height, unless it is overcome by corruption and wickedness, which may take its reins in hands and turn it away from the path of righteousness and blessings.
The disturbing things, which corrupt nature are sometimes the result of the past centuries or sometimes they are the creation of the lowly environment and ha bits and customs, or both these things together are responsible for the disturbances. These things are a great danger for the nature of man. They cause a variety of diseases in it. The real jihad of a reformer is to fight these inhibitions and customs and to weaken their strength. He tries to relieve Nature of these dangers in order that its original purity may be regained and it may be able to fulfil its real responsibility.
Islam has given a full clarification of this method.
After explaining the natural religion in the above quoted verses, the holy Quran says immediately thereafter :
"Turn back in repentance to Him, and fear Him; Establish regular prayers, and be not you among those who join gods with Allah, those who split up and become sects, each party rejoicing in that which is with itself:"

-(Rum: 31-32)

To encourage faith in place of disbelief, righteousness in place of wickedness, to adopt the policy of fearing God, in place of disturbed thoughts in respect of Allah the righteous people's unity of thought and action-these are the manifestations that show that man has remained on the righteous nature. This has been clarified in the following verse of the Quran :
"We indeed created man in the best of moulds, then we have abased him to be the lowest of the low, except such as believe and do righteous deeds."

-(At-Teen: 4-6)

What is the best mould or form of man? The understanding of Truth and adopting it, fulfilment of its requirements and meeting of its demands. This is called the attachment to virtuousness and decency, and consideration of these two good qualities in man's individual and collective life is the real achievement. And attempts to make them operative in all the departments of life is the real mould and form.
But there is a very large number of people who do not reach this high level. They remain attached to the earth only. They follow their own desires, and express disobedience of God's commands. In this way they fall to the lowest level Quran has called this " Asfala safileen" (lowest of the low), to which Allah has thrown such people.
To throw the men of such nature to the lowest level is according to the divine law regarding guidance and transgression. And these laws are true and based on justice. The holy Quran mentions them as under:

"And Allah will not mislead a people after He has guided them, in order that He may make clear to them what to fear (and avoid)-for Allah has knowledge of all things."

(Tauba: 115).

In Surah A'raf this law of guidance and transgression has been mentioned thus:
"Those who behave arrogantly on the earth in defiance of right-them I will turn away from My signs; even if they see all the signs, they will not believe in them; And if they see the way of right conduct, they will not adopt it as the way of error is the way they will adopt; for they rejected Our signs, and failed to take warning from them."

(A'raf: 146)

Who is it then that remains on the 'best mould' and keeps himself away from the indignities of the world? In the verses of the Surah At-Teen occurring immediately after those quoted above the answer is given:
"Except such as believe and do the righteous deeds."

(At-Teen)

In the foregoing pages we have seen that the outcome of Faith and the Righteous Deeds is the excellence of moral character.

There is a Counter to the Wicked Nature

Islam's stand ,vis-a-vis man's pure nature and its strength and firmness has been discussed. As regards its dealings with the devil-like natures, that has also been made clear. Islam warns mischievous-natured people. It entrusts its reins in the hands of the healthy intellect; it encourages it to bow down to the pure nature and to surrender itself to Allah.
The prophet has hinted at some of these kinds of natures :
"The son of Adam reaches the old age and two of his habits do not leave him. One is greed and the second is the unending succession of hopes."

-(Muslim)

"The worst evil found in man is the frightening cowardice and the un-dignifying miserliness."

-(Abu Daud)

"If the son of Adam is given a valley of gold, he will desire to have another one. And if the other is also given, he will be greedy to have the third one. The hunger of Adam's son will not be satisfied except when his remains are mixed with the dust. And the one who turns to Allah, Allah accepts his repentance."

(Bukhari)

The holy Quran has mentioned some of the habits in the Surah Ale Imran :
"Fair in the eyes of men is the love of things they covet, women and sons; heaped up hoards of gold and silver; horses branded (for blood and excellence) ; and (wealth of) cattle and well-tilled land. Such are the possessions of this world's life; but in the nearness to Allah is the best of the goals (to return to)."

-(AIe-Imran: 14)

The first thing Islam wants man to pay attention to is this that to run after the carnal desires of the self and to follow its unending demands will never satisfy self and make it contented. Truth and right path will not be acceptable to it.
The condition of the self is that when its one desire is satisfied, it immediately demands to have some other desire satisfied. It is always busy in eating, drinking, and having a good time, and greedy with desire to have more and more of everything. It has no hesitation in committing sin and acts of aggression and cruelty. Therefore, Quran has forbidden men to follow the desires that have been considered haram :
"Nor follow you the lusts (of your heart), for they will mislead you from the path of Allah; for those who wander astray from the path of Allah, is a penalty grievous, for that they forget the Day of Account."

-(Saad: 26)

The policy of the infidels and the necessity of opposing it and its importance have been mentioned in these words:
"If the Truth had been in accord with their desires, truly the heavens and the earth and all beings therein would have been in confusion and corruption ! Nay, We have sent them their admonition, but they turn away from their admonition."

(Muminun.. 71)

It is necessary that a distinction be made between the forbidden desires of the self and the lawful desires, because some so-called religious people have mixed up these two very dangerously.
If man wants to enjoy the goods of the world, then there is nothing wrong in it, but it is a very serious error that this kind of lawful demands and desires has also been included in the list of forbidden, wicked acts.
Its consequence is this that man satisfies his lawful and respectable desires, but his conscience becomes like the conscience of those people who accept crimes as lawful and adopt them willingly. In this way their conscience

When he realises that he has committed a mistake, and that sin is an inevitable part of his life, then he commits more serious sins and indulges in the strictly forbidden acts. In other words this time he becomes a criminal and a sinner in the real sense of the word.
The holy Quran has paid special attention to this aspect and has very clearly declared the pure desires of the self and the lawful wishes as proper and lawful, and provided it with a chance to use *halal* and clean things. It declared any interference of narrowness and inhibition in this respectable and lawful sphere by way of any checks on the self as bad and obscene, because it opens the gate for obscene acts and sinning.
"O you people I Eat on earth what is lawful (hala) and clean (tayyib) and do not follow the footsteps of Satan.Indeed, he is an open enemy for you. He will command you (to do) what is evil and indecent and induce you to say about Allah that which you do not know."

-(AI-Baqarh : 168-169)

It is a fact that to put restrictions on the consumptions of what is lawful (hala) and clean (tayyib) is nothing but levelling false charges against Allah, and this thing amounts to evil and indecency which Satan commands men to do. Islam does not like to repress such natures and inclinations with force and punishment, nor does it want to placate or Batter them, but Islam follows a balanced method which is free of any kind of excess.

Morality holds the Reins

As the rules and regulations of the healthy nature are secure in faith and reform and they have no connection with heresy and agnosticism, similar is the case of the rebellious natures and habits.
In both the cases only a strong and firm moral character can control it. Where the holy Quran has mentioned man's weakness, his anxiety, his richness and indifference, there it has also made it clear that the remedy of these indignities lies in following the path of religion.
"Truly man was created very impatient; fretful when evil touches him; and niggardly when good reaches him ; not so those devoted to prayer, those who remain steadfast to their prayer; and those in whose wealth is recognised right for (the needy) who asks and him who is prevented (for some reason from asking) ; and those who hold to the Truth of the Day of Judgment; and those who fear the displeasure of their Lord ,for the Lord's displeasure is the opposite of peace and tranquillity; and those who guard their chastity."

-(.41-Ma'arij.. 19-29)

It is common knowledge that good moral character does not develop suddenly. Nor does it become strong and firm in the beginning. It requires consistency and gradualness. And in strengthening it there come many stages.
That is the reason why in its nourishment and growth it is required to perform such acts that have to be repeated. The quality that is developed should have consistency, e.g. prayer, fasting, Hajj, Zakat, and the performance of other forms of worship, confirmation of the Day of the Judgment, and to be fearful of its punishments, etc.
When the rebellious natures insist on their acts and are steadfast on their wrong stance, and continue to attempt to traverse the wrong path from time to time, then to check and prevent it no fixed and temporary remedy can be found. Their transgression and intensity can be brought to the normal level only by such an activist who is more strong and powerful than them and who may be able to bring them to a balanced level.
The long and short of the discussion is that Islam respects the human nature and considers its teachings as the voice of that nature. It warns the rebellious natures and reforms their point of view. Those forms of worship which have been made compulsory in Islam are such as strengthen the human nature and turn the wind of desires to the right direction. And these forms of worship do not perform their duties satisfactorily and the desired objective cannot be obtained from them unless they generate the excellent moral character and the tendency to exemplary treatment of others.

CHAPTER 5'

PUNISHMENT FOR MORAL CRIMES

No Coercion la Morality

To generate goodness in someone by coercion and to call him a man of good moral character is not possible.
Similarly no faith can be developed in any person by means of force or terrorism. Only personal and intellectual freedom is the sole basis of responsibility and accountability.
Islam understands this reality and respects it. It builds up its edifice on the foundation of the excellent moral character. Where is the need for Islam to use force and coercion to bring man to the right path and to make him run towards righteousness, when it has full confidence in the human nature and is certain that if the obstructions before man are removed then the best generation can be developed?
Goodness is ingrained in the human nature. It does not mean that it cannot do anything except good, but it means that only good can co-ordinate with his original nature and offer resistance. The nature wants to attach itself to good only and wants to function in its light, like the bird that after getting free from the cage flies round and round in the sky in ecstasy in accordance with its foremost wish.
According to Islam the right method is to break nature's checks and chains. After this when man falls down to the ground, and has no strength to rise and walk, then be should be considered as sick and efforts should be made to treat him.
Islam does not order such kind of sick persons to be thrown out of society, provided his existent is not harmful and damaging to others.
Within the limits of this sphere, Islam fights against moral crimes. At first it imagines that every man wants to lead a decent life and wants to live by the sweat of his brow and enjoy luxuries on what be earns from his own labours, that is he does not depend on thefts and looting.
Then what thing compels him to take to thieving?
In order to provide him for the necessities of life. Therefore, Islam says that the necessities and the means should be in such abundant quantifies that they may make him indifferent and above taking wrong steps.
This is the responsibility of the society. If it is deficient and compels the individual to steal, then the responsibility for this crime falls on the deficient society, and not on the head of the wrong-committing individual.
But if the society provides his requirements, and after this the individual advances in the wrong direction, then the actual condition of the individual should be ascertained before inflicting any penalty (Hudd) on him. Probably there may be such extenuating circumstances that may save him from the punishment. As it Is, Islam desires delay in inflicting punishment. The Messenger of Allah has reported to have said: "It is better if the Imam pardons somebody by error than he penalises him by error"

Fixation of Penalties for the Security of the Society

When after examining the conditions and problems it is ascertained that the individual's nature is bent on rebellion, and that the society which has brought him up and had provided for him is being subjected to his depredations and he wants to repay its kindness with disturbance of peace, then if that society inflicts some penalty on this kind of an individual and wants to cut away that harmful limb, it cannot be criticised or blamed.
The Holy Quran has termed a theft deserving the penalty of cutting the hand as the theft of tyranny and corruption,and about such a thief it has stated as under:
"But if the thief repent after his crime, and amend his conduct , Allah turns to him in forgiveness ;for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."

-(Malda:42)

The penalty which Islam inflict in reality for saving the reformist , welfare , and just society from the damage that a harmful member may cause it. A criminal who repays' justice with cruelty and reform with corruption-who would like to consider him deserving of mercy ?

Islam Appeals to the Heart

I have mentioned this example merely to show that the penalties for moral crimes have not been fixed with a view to generating forcefully goodness in society, nor does it amount to coerce people to follow the right path.

For Islam the better way is to appeal to the hearts of men, to awaken their sleeping nature, to stir their repressed inclination and desire towards progress and perfection, to return them to the presence of God, and to adopt such a method that would have convincing arguments and the sweetness of love and brotherhood.
The moral values should be explained and clarified in such a way that the heart may be convinced that it is a necessary to adopt them for attaining the good and the righteous qualities.
In such an environment the rule of that law is necessary which helps in nourishing the human capabilities and in developing excellent habits and good moralcharacter.
There is nothing wrong if this useless and profitless limb is cut and thrown away, because in the society we are undertaking farming of various kinds of produce. The purpose is growth and nourishment, whether it may involve the clearance of the wild plants or the thorn bearing shrubs.
The security of the interests of common man and their safety is not a thing of less important, therefore, there is no reason for being critical of these penalties which are inflicted by Islam. This thing has been mentioned in the Torah, and all the divine religions have placed emphasis on this.

The Responsibility of the Society

According to Islam the society itself plays a very important role in the spread of good or evil that spreads in that society. It (Islam) wants to attain power because it wants, with other things, to form a society in such a way that it may be helpful in encouraging chastity, righteousness, aversion from wickedness, proliferation or good acts, indifferent to love for world, steadfastness for the right path and consistency.
The Prophet bas told the story or a murderer who wanted to repent for his crimes. He inquired of the address of the greatest learned man of the land. His name was given to him, whom he saw and said :
“I have committed hundred murders. Is there any chance of repentance for me ? He was told: “What thing can come between you and repentance. Go to a particular place where some good slaves of Allah reside and are always found worshipping Him. You also join them in worshipping. and do not return to your village, because it is a bad place”
-(Buhari)
In another version it is narrated that he went to a monk and .related his whole story and placed his difficulty before . him. The monk told him :
“You have committed a big mistake. How am I concerned with this, However, there are two villages One of them is named 'Nasrah' that is supporter , of Allah and the other one is named 'Kufrah' that is rejector of God. The people of Nasrab perform the deeds of the people of the paradise. Any person who follows other method cannot stay there. The citizens of Kufrab perform the deeds of the people of the hell. There is no room for the people following other policies to stay there. Therefore, you go to the people of Nasrah. If you stayed there and worked like those people, then there would be no doubt about the acceptance of your repentance.”
-(Tibrani)

For this reason Islam says that for the safety of the healthy nature and for the training and reform of the rebellious tendencies the care and vigilance of the environment is necessary, and in the formation of the good moral character it plays a very important role,
We are sure that if all these aspects are taken care of, then a clean and tidy society can be brought into; existence, in which pure qualities and chaste character may be nourished.

CHAPTER 6

THE ENTIRE HUMANITY DESERVES OUR MORALITY

Our Treatment of the Non-Muslims

Every religion has its characteristic symbols, which make it distinct from every other religion, Undoubtedly there are certain fixed forms of worship in Islam, which have been made compulsory for its followers. Besides there are certain values prevalent among the followers which have no relation with the Non Muslims.
But the moral teachings do not come under this category or within the sphere of this principle, Every Muslim has been made responsible to employ good manners in dealing with all the citizens of the land unhesitatingly, For every Muslim it is necessary that he should be truthful in dealing with the Non-Muslims. Similarly good qualities like charities keeping one's promise, tolerance, decency, generosity, co-operation, etc. are to be brought into play while dealing with Muslims and Non-Muslims alike,
The holy Quran has commanded us not to indulge in such debates with the Jews and the Christians that may encourage mutual enmity, clashes and quarrels. It says:

“And do not indulge in disputation with the people of the Book except in a refined way, unless it be with those of them who inflict wrong, and say: “We believe in the Revelation which came down to us and in that which came down to you Our Allah and your Allah is one „. and it is to Him we bow'.”

-(Ankabut ..46)

And the followers of Moosa and Issa (Moses and Jesus) were asked, expressing wonder, whether they are indulging in this kind of argumentation and polemics?
“Say: 'Do you argue with us about Allah when He is our Lord as well as your Lord? We are accountable for our deeds and you for yours so we are sincerely (dedicated) to Him'.”

-(Baqarah.. 139)

It is a famous incident of the biography of the Prophet that he owed something to a Jew, The Jew demanded repayment and in a very harsh tone said: “O Sons of Abdul Muttalib! You people unnecessarily delay the repayment of your loans.” At that place Hazrat Umar bin AI-Khattab was also present. He decided to teach the Jew, who insulted the Prophet, good manners, and drew his sword from the scabbard. But the Messenger of Allah silenced Umar saying: “I and he deserve better treatment, Teach him to demand his money in a better way and advise me to repay it in a refined manner.”
Islam has commanded to deal justly and fairly even if the opponent may be a wrongdoer or an infidel. Allah’s Messenger has said:
“The prayer of the oppressed is answered, If he is wicked and wrongdoer, its ill effects will go against him.”

-(Ahmed)

In another Hadith it is stated: “Even if the oppressed person is an infidel, there is no obstruction between his prayer and its answer. Give up doubtful things and adopt those matters in which there may be no doubt.”
In the light of these authorities and the commands, Islam has advised its followers not to mal-treat their ideological and religious opponents,
In connection with the insistence on treating the followers of the other religion kindly, there is one more hadith:
Hazrat Ibn. Umar says that a goat was slaughtered in his house. When he came home he inquired whether the gift was sent to the neighbouring Jew or not? He further says: “**I have heard the Messenger of Allah as saying' Jibril' had been regularly insisting on me to treat kindly my neighbours, so much so that I surmised that the neighbour would be made a recipient of the inheritance.”**

-(Bukharl)

Similarly Islam has ordered that its followers should be kind to their relatives, even though they may have rejected this religion, which they have made their own. Therefore, following the Truth does not mean that the rights of the relatives may be usurped:
“And bear them company in this life with justice (and consideration), and follow the way of those who turn to Me

-(Luqman ..15)

The Need of Morality for the Nation and the Country

This discussion was on the importance of morality at the level of individuals. As regards the importance and need of morality at the public and collective level, Islam says that the progress and the survival of the nations, the nourishment and the development of their civilization and culture, and the consolidation of their power and strength depend on morality. If the people have good and excellent moral character, then all these good qualities will be found in them, but if their moral character is a lower levels then kingdom and rule will soon end,

"Nations live till their morality lives.
When their moral character declines, they also decline,"

This reality is fully explained in a hadith in which the Prophet says to the people of his nation that although they have control over the whole of Arabia, and are in a position to decide the fate of the people of the country, as they hold an important position, their power can be maintained on the pillar of morality only.

Anas bin Malik says: "We were sitting in a house where some members of the Ansar and Muhajir were present, The Messenger of Allah came into the room and everybody tried to make room for him near his own seat. Then he proceeded towards the door and stood taking support of the door and said:

"The leaders will be from the Quraish, and I have great right on you and they have also a right on you as they would do. When they would be requested to show mercy, they would show mercy. When they would give a judgment, it would be based on justice. And when they would make a covenant, they would honour it. He who does not do like this, there would be on him the curse of Allah, of the angels and of all the people"

(Tibrani)

This hadith unambiguously shows that any person, community, nation or government would be deserving of as much honour and respect as they would be the representatives of the best qualities in this world and would be striving to achieve high objectives.

If a government flaunts the label of Islam and Quran but the people are not satisfied with it, if it does not decide their matters justly, if it is not kind to the needy and does not honour its covenant, then it should be understood that in this government Islam and Quran are merely names, and this government is bereft of Islam's basic values and it deserves to be cursed from every corner of the earth and the skies.

Hazrat Husain narrates that the Messenger of Allah has said:

"When Allah wants to deal kindly with a nation, He entrusts its reins in the hands of the wise men, gives wealth to its generous people; and when He wants to deal with a nation harshly, he entrust its control in the hands of foolish people, and gives wealth to its miserly men."

(Abu Daud)

It is a famous saying of Imam Ibn Taimiyah: "Allah guards the justice-loving government, even if it is the government of the infidels, and destroys the tyrant government, even if it is the government of Muslims."

In the light of the holy Book and the Sunnah, morality is the perfect religion and also the perfect world. If any nation loses its honour in the eyes of Allah or commands no respect among the people, it so happens because of its losing good moral character and becoming deprived of decent and honourable traits.

CHAPTER 7

THE TRUTH

Advice to be True

Allah has created this whole universe on the basis of love, and has demanded of the people that they should build up their life on the foundation of truth, to make truth and straight dealing a practice of their life, and should give place to truth only in their talks and dealings.

When this clear sense is lost sight of by people, and false stories, superstitions and absurd beliefs rule their self, ideas and thoughts, then hardness and harshness are generated in them they move away from the right path, and they totally give up those realities the adoption of which was necessary.

For this reason the strong and firm pillar of a Muslim's character is straight dealing. It is his duty to be attached to truth in every matter and to see every problem and affair through the glasses of truth, To keep it before him in every decision is the clearest manifestation of his dealing and treatment, Similarly the construction of the society in Islam is made on this foundation that mere conjectures and superstitions should be opposed baseless things and imaginary stories should be thrown outs doubts and misgivings should not be encouraged, because strong and firm realities only deserve to be manifested; they should have their imprint on the society s and their help should be taken in strengthening various relations.

Allah's Messenger has said:

"Keep away from ill-thinking, because ill-thinking is the greatest falsehood,"

(Bukhari)

Another hadith says:

"Leave alone doubtful things, follow those matters in which there is no doubts for truth is a means of satisfaction and falsehood is the cause of doubts and misgivings."

(Tirmizi)

Quran has expressed condemnation of those communities who follow conjectures and superstitions that have filled their brains with absurdities and has staked their present and future, with the help of the false stories, on the gamble of corruption and disruption:

"They follow nothing but conjecture and what their own souls desire, even though there has already come to them Guidance from their Lord."

(An-Najm ..23)

"But they have no knowledge therein. They follow nothing but conjecture and conjecture avails nothing against Truth"

(An-Najm.. 28)

Since Islam respects truth most strongly, it turns away liars very harshly. It admonishes them very severely. Hazrat Ayesha narrates :

"Allah's Messenger did not hate anything as strongly as he hated falsehood, If he received in formation that a particular man has told a lie, he used to throwaway that man's respect and honour from his heart till the time he was not informed that he has repented for it,"

(Ahmed)

Another narration by her states:

"For the Messenger of Allah falsehood was the worst habit in a person, If any man told a lie in his presence, that man's thought always troubled him until the time he was informed that he has repented",

(Ibn Habban)

This habit of the Prophet is not at all surprising. This was the policy of our forefathers. Their relations were formed on the basis of righteousness and good moral character. They knew each other. If anyone had blemishes in his character, and if he could be singled out on account of his misdeeds, then his position in that society would be like the position of a man suffering from an infectious itching disease in a healthy society, and he was not considered deserving of any respect until he was not cured of that defect

The distinctive characteristic of the Muslim society in its first period was truth, disciplines, tolerance and cautious manner of speaking, Falsehood, breaking of promises, false accusations, and baseless things are the signs of disruption or of breaking away relation from religion. Or if they are to be termed as having relation with the religion, then it would be caused the religious business of the false accusers, deceivers and tricksters, or the religiosity of liars and promise breakers.

Falsehood is a Great Curse

Falsehood is such an evil that discloses the internal corruption and wickedness of the liar; and this is a name of the wrong dealing which only acts in spreading evil. so much so that even without the needs that are troublesome or the forcing inclinations it leads persons to committing sins.

Some evils are such that a man is involved in them totally. They are like diseases which require a very long -drawn treatment; they are like fright and cowardice, which always hinder the progress of a coward and a frightened man, or like greed which makes men miserly and stingy.

When some people come out for jihad to accompany the soldiers. they are shivering in their boots. Or some other people who are terrified when they work out the amount of Zakat that they have to pay. What is the comparison of these coward and miserly natures with those brave and generous natures which rush towards death laughing and which spend their wealth in the cause of Allah most willingly!

Here some excuse can be found for such person as they become a prey of their fears and doubts when called upon to offer sacrifices

But there can be absolutely no excuse for those who make lying their habit and who for the whole of their life go on deceiving people by their falsehoods.

Allah's Messenger said :

“All the evils can be found in a momin, except dishonesty and falsehood.”

(Aluned)

The Messenger of Allah was asked whether any Muslim could be a coward. He answered : “Yes.” He was asked: “Can a momin be a miser ?' He said that yea, he could be a miser. He was again asked: “Can a momin be a liar?” He replied: “No !”

(Malik)

The replies of the Prophet show that these factors of deficiency and weakness enter some persons' nature and when they are called upon to do their duty or pay the dues of Arab and His slaves, then these factors adversely influence them. But this does not mean that miserliness is tolerated and cowardice is a lesser evil.

How is “ possible when non-payment of zakat and running away from jihad are acts which touch the borderline of infidel ” (kufr) ,

The extent to which a liar and a defiant person may spread falsehood and however wide this extent may be his sin before Allah will be to the same extent. Journalists, who misguide the people by false news, politicians who misrepresent important public problems and slaves of selfishness who cast aspersions against eminent persons and ladies of good character-all these sections commit terrible crimes and their punishment is very severe.

Allah's Messenger said:

“One night I saw two men. They came to me and said:' Any man whom you see talking by widening his jaws, consider him a liar, He tells a lie which is copied through his medium, till it is talked of in the whole world. He goes on doing this till the Doomsday.”

(Fathul Bari)

Making false promises to their subjects by the rulers also comes in this category, because the falsehood spoken from the pulpit spreads to the four corners of the world.

It is in the Tradition that “Three persons can never enter Paradise. First the old man who commits illegal sex, second the man who tells lies and third that poor man who indulges in pride.”

(AI Bazzar)

To invent lies against Allah's religion is the worst evil. One who has the slightest relation with Allah and His Messenger will never indulge in this kind of activity.

This is the worst kind of liar, and the consequences which he will have to face are terrible.

The Prophet has said: **“The consequence of inventing falsehood against me is not as bad as it is for inventing falsehood against anybody. Let the man who purposely and wittingly makes a false statement about me make his destination Hell.”**

(Bukhari)

In the list of false charges and accusations are included all those inventions and absurdities which the uneducated have fabricated against Allah's religion, which have no place in the faith. The general public has taken them to be the religion though they have nothing to do with it. In fact they are nothing but mere pastime and plaything.
Allah's Messenger has warned his followers against the sources of these invented absurdities, has admonished them to be wary of adopting other ways than those directed by the Quran and the Sunnah. He has said:
“In the last period of my Ummah there will come people who will be deceitful, liars. They will tell you things which you would never have heard, nor have your forefathers heard them. Be wary of them; let them not misguide you and let them not involve you in corruptions.”

(Muslim)

Accustom your Children to be Truthful
Islam commands that in the hearts of the children the seeds of the greatness and importance of truth be sown, so that they may grow up and develop on truth and may become young in its lap; and they may give it its due place in their talks.
Abdullah Ibn A 'amir says that once my mother called me when the Prophet was present in my house. My mother asked me to come and said that she would give me a certain thing. He asked what did she want to give? She said that she wanted to give me a date (fruit). The Prophet said: “ If you had not given him this date, then the committing of a falsehood would have been entered into your record of deeds.”.
(Abu Daud).
Abu Huraira says that the Prophet has said:
“Anybody who called a child saying that he would give him a certain thing, and did not give it, then it is a lie.”

(Ahmed)

It is worth noting that in what a wise way the Prophet has instructed his followers to train their children in such a manner that they should consider truth and straight dealing respectable things and should avoid telling lies. Had the Prophet ignored these things and had not emphatically reminded about them, then there was a danger that the children on growing up would not have considered telling lies as sin.
Adoption of straight dealing and telling the truth has been very strictly insisted upon, so much so that it has been enjoined upon to take care about this in even small household matters.

Asma Binte Yazid narrates that she once asked the Messenger of Allah:
“If some one of us women stated that she had no desire to have a certain thing even though she had that desire, then would it be considered a lie ?”
He replied: “Falsehood is written as falsehood, and a small falsehood is written as a small falsehood.”

(Muslim)

Prohibited to tell a Lie even in a Joke
The Establisher of the Shariah (p, b. u. h,) has warned of all the occasions where falsehood can be used and the adverse consequences of the same, so much so that it is not possible for even an ordinary enforcer to misguide the people about the reality or to lessen its importance.
A man tends to make false statements in cutting jokes, thinking that on the occasions of entertaining people there is nothing wrong if baseless information is given or false and imaginary events are related. But Islam, which considers providing relief to hearts as permissible, has fixed only those methods proper and permissible which are within that: limits of truth, because halal is much broader than haram and that truth is independent of falsehood. Allah's Messenger has said:
“Death for the man who indulges in story-telling in order to make some people laugh and for that he relies on falsehood. There is death for him, there is destruction for him.”

(Tirmizi)

“I give guarantee of a house in the middle of Paradise for the man who has given up falsehood, though he was required to indulge in humour.”

(Baihaqui)

The Prophet has said:
“A Momin cannot have complete faith unless he gives up falsehood in his jokes and debates though in all other matters he speaks the truth.”

(Ahmed)

This is our daily observation that people give full rein to their tongues in the matter of humorous talks to make others laugh, and do not hesitate to spread the tales and stories invented by friends or foes only for the purpose of getting some pleasure or for pulling some one's leg, when the world has absolutely prohibited such a wrong policy, and this is a fact that this kind of entertainment and amusements and false acts create enmities and rivalries,

Avoid Exaggeration in Praise

Some peoples when they praise somebody, go to the extent of exaggerating and making false statements, For a Muslim it is necessary that when he praises somebody he should do it to the extent to which he knows about that man, He should avoid exaggeration and falsehood in showering praises of the praised one, although he may be deserving of the praises, for exaggeration is a kind of falsehood which has been forbidden,
To a person who was praising the Prophet, he said: **“Do not indulge in exaggeration while praising me, as the Christians did in the case of Ibn Maryam (Christ). I am only a slave. So only say that he is a slave of Allah and His Messenger.”**

(Razin)

A group of such people is always found who lick the boots of the leaders and rulers of the country and praise them to heaven, The main purpose of their lives is to compose very lengthy panegyric poems or to write long-drawn essays in praise of their benefactors, Thus they try to make a mountain of the molehill and place an unknown person in the palace of fame. Sometimes they do not even hesitate to call the tyrant rulers as standard bearers of justice and coward and chicken hearted soldiers as brave and lion-hearted fighters. Their only purpose in this is to earn wealth.
This is the worst kind of falsehood. Allah's Messenger has counselled us to totally reject them and expose them till they give up their wrong practices.
Abu Huraira says that the Prophet has commanded us that we should throw dust in the face of those who indulge in exaggeration in their praises.
(Tirmizi)

The commentators have pointed out that the persons mentioned here are those who make exaggeration as their habit and through this try to earn gifts and presents from the praised ones but those persons who praise the performers of good acts with a view to encouraging them and to inciting others to follow their example are not meant.
The limits where a Muslim stops and which keep him distinct from the bootlickers and the exaggerators are: that he praises his benefactor or a good person, but he does not let him indulge in vanity and pride. These limits have been clarified by the Prophet.
Hazrat Abu Bakr narrates that a man praised some one in the presence of Allah's Messenger and the Prophet told him: **“Fie on you, you have separated the head of your companion,” He repeated these words and then said: “If some one wants to praise his brothers then if he is aware of the facts then he should say that I think he is such and such and Allah is the real Knower, and there is none purer and innocent than Allah; I consider him bearer of these qualities.”**

(Bukhari)

Keep away from Falsehood and Deception In Trade

Traders make false statements while showing their wares and stating their prices. The basis of trade in our midst is unlimited greed. The shopkeeper desires that their should be dearness, while the buyer wants to get the commodities free of charge. It is wealth which controls activities of buying and selling in the markets and in different fields. Islam hates this kind of deceptive affair and the senseless debate and disputation latent in it, The Prophet has said: “The buyers and sellers are free till they do not separate and if they have acted with honesty, and have explained the defects of commodities, then Allah will bless them with prosperity. And if both of them tried to deal dishonestly and tried to

In another tradition it stated:
"The prosperity of the dealing of both the persons is terminated. The untrue and false oath will help get the commodity sold, but it reduces the earning ."
(Ahmed)
The buyers who go to the shopkeepers are mostly ignorant of the real situation, and whatever the shopkeeper says they believe it, The honest thing is not to take undue advantage of the simplicity of men for the purpose of obtaining double price or for concealing the defects.
The Messenger of Allah has said :
"What would be a greater dishonesty than this that when you are talking with your brother he may be thinking that you are telling the truth whereas you are deceiving him by telling lies."

(Bukhari)

He has also said :
"It is not lawful for a Muslim to sell such a commodity that has a defect, except that the defect is shown to the buyer."

(Bukhari)

Ibn Abi Adna narrates that a man opened a shop in the market and swore that he would sell such a commodity as no one else would be selling, so that he may deceive some Muslims; so the following verses were revealed:

"Verily, those who sell the covenant with Allah and their oaths for a small price, there is no compensation for them in the Hereafter. On the Day of Judgment Allah will not speak to them, nor will He look at them, and nor will He purify them; but for them is very severe punishment."

(Baqarah)

Disregard of truth in giving evidence is the worst type of falsehood. When a Muslim should stand up for giving evidence, he should state the truth unhesitatingly; regardless of the fact whether it is against his close friend or a favourite person. No relationship or prejudice should deviate him from the right path, nor any greed or bribe should be able to make him waver in his stand.

"O You who believe I Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be (against) rich or poor; for Allah can best protect both. Follow not the lusts (of your heart), lest you swerve, and if you distort (justice) or decline to do justice, verily Allah is well-acquainted -with all that you do."

(Nissa: 135)

Hazrat Abu Bakr narrates Allah has stated:
"May I not tell you the major sins ?" Three times he repeated the same thing. We requested: "Why not O Messenger of Allah ?" He replied: "To associate some one else with Allah, to disobey the parents and to murder some one unjustly." He was leaning. Then he got up and said: "And to tell lies and to give false evidence." He went on repeating it till we said to ourselves it would be better if he were silent then."

(Bukhari)

Trickery and deception is a falsehood which has layers and layers of darkness. It does not only involve the concealment of truth but it also tries to prove that the falsehood is truth. In some special matters it harms only a few individuals but in public matters it becomes a severe and deadly danger against the whole nation.
For this reason the Prophet has very bluntly and emphatically counselled to keep away from it and bas warned against it.

Do not break your Promises
The traders and the industrialists particularly should take special care to see that they keep their promises, that they are true to their words and that they do not change their stand. It is a very sad state of affairs that among the Muslims the tendency of breaking promises and crossing the limits has become very common, when their religion has termed the false promises as symbols of disruption.

The Messenger of Allah considered the words coming out from the mouth as holy and the words that fell on his ears as

Abdullah bin Abi Hama says that he entered into a contract for the sale of a commodity with the Prophet before he was blessed with prophet-hood, and some commodities had remained to be sold. He promised to the prophet that he would hand over a certain thing to him at a certain place. Then he forgot all about this. After three days he remembered his promise and went to the appointed place. He saw that the Prophet was present at the spot. He only said this:
“O young man! You worried me. I am waiting here for you for the last three days .”

(Abu Daud)

It is narrated that the Prophet had promised Jabir bin Abdullah that he would give him some gifts from the stock of articles coming from Bahrain, but before fulfilling this promise he died. When the stock from Bahrain arrived at the place of the First Caliph, he caused an announcement to be made in the public that anyone whom the Prophet might have promised to give something from this stock or anyone who had lent something to the Prophet should come to him and take away his due”
(Bukhari)
It is worth noting how the words are appraised and they are enforced, so that they may not become worthless if left uncared for. False promises do untold harm to the interests of the society. They cause inconvenience to the people and waste time, Redeeming your pledges is a commendable quality. Allah considers fulfilling of promises as one of the attributes of prophet-hood :
“Also mention in the Book (the story of) Ismail; he was true to what he promised and he was a Messenger, Prophet. He used to enjoin on his people prayer and charity and he was most acceptable in sight of the Lord “

(Maryam.. 54-55)

In these verses the order of the good qualities show what position the quality of fulfilling of promises enjoys; and Ismail showed that he was true to his word when his father told him that he saw a dream in which he was slaughtering his son, Ismail, and asked him what he thought about it. The son, who was true to his word, replied: “God willing, you will find me patient and steadfast.”
Sometimes man relies on falsehood when he commits a mistake, and he wants to save himself from the bad consequences of that mistake. This is very unwise and brings a bad name. It amounts to going from one evil to another, which is worse than the first evil. It is necessary that man should own his mistakes. It is likely that his truthfulness and his sense of sorrow over his mistake may save him from the bad consequences and he may be pardoned.
When a Muslim senses some danger or is afraid to speak the truth, it is proper that he should show courage and try to avoid getting ensnared in the net of falsehood.
Allah's Messenger has said:
“ Adopt truth, even if you see your destruction in it, for the (final) salvation is in it.”

(Ibn Abi-duniya)

In another hadith it is mentioned:
“When a person tells a lie, the bad odour that emanates from it keeps the angels one mile away.”

(Tirmizi)

Truth of Speech leads to Truth of Action

If a man is truthful and straight in his speech and dealings, then inevitably there will be truthfulness and sincerity in his actions and goodness and reform in his conditions. By adopting truthful and straight methods in dealing with others, this light of truth also illuminates man's heart and mind and their darkness also vanish:
“O you who believe ! Fear Allah and (always) say a word directed to the right;. that He may make your conduct whole and sound and forgive you your sins ;. He that obeys Allah and His Messenger has already attained the highest achievement.”

(Ahzab.. 70-71)

Right action is the desired actions about which there is no misgiving, because it is the creation of certainty. There is no idea of defect in that, because it is the companion of sincerity. There is no curve in it, because its source is truth.
The success of the communities and nations in the matter of conveying their message depends on the fact that the bearers of the message must be performers of right action, If they have an abundant record of right and truthful action, then they can reach the zenith of success and glory, otherwise they swerve from their destination in the way, for mere idleness, senseless activities, slogan shouting and self-praise would not be of any use.
Allah's Messenger has said:
“Adopt truth, for truth shows the path of righteousness, and righteousness shows the path to Paradise. A man speaks the truth regularly and adopts truthful ways till he is recorded as a truthful person before Allah; and

keep away from falsehood, for falsehood leads to wickedness, and wickedness throws in the Hell, A person tells lies regularly and attaches himself to falsehood till he is recorded as a liar before Allah,"

(Fathul Bari)

Evil and wickedness towards which the habit of telling lies leads is the last stage of the destruction of self and the lowness of faith.

Imam Malik has reported about the hadith narrated by Ibn Masood: " A person regularly tells lies and adopts falsehood (as his policy), till a black point is imprinted in his heart, and slowly and slowly the whole heart becomes black. At that time his name is entered in the list of liars before Allah."

Allah has stated in Quran :

"It is those who believe not in the Signs of Allah that forge falsehood, it is they who lie."

(Nahl: 105)

Righteousness whose path is shown by truth is the highest peak of goodness to which only men of high determination can reach. In this connection the following verses of the holy Quran would suffice:

"It is no virtue that you turn your face to the East and the West, but virtue is that one should believe in Allah, and the Last Day and the angels and the prophets; and spend out of love for Him his wealth on relatives and orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and on those who ask and for ransom of the slaves and establish salat and pay zakat. And those who fulfil the pledges they make and steadfast in adversity and affliction and in times of struggle, such are the people as are truthful and God fearing."

(Baqarah: 177)

CHAPTER 8

TRUST AND HONESTY

The Broader Sense of Trust
Islam expects of its followers that they will be masters of live hearts and wakeful conscience, which would ensure the protection of the rights of God and humanity and which would also protect their action: from the commitment of excesses. Therefore it is necessary that every Muslim should be *Ameen*, "trustworthy".
In the eyes of the Shariah, Trust has a very broad sense. This word contains an ocean of meaning, but underneath it all is the sense of responsibility, the sense of having to appear before Allah and to account for one's actions, the details of which are given in the Hadith :
"Every one of you is a guardian and everyone will be asked about his subjects. Imam is a guardian. He will be asked about his subjects. A man is the guardian of the persons in his household. He is answerable about them. A woman is the guardian of her husband's house. She will be asked about her responsibility. The servant is the guardian of the articles of his master. He is answerable about this responsibility of his, "

(Bukhari)

The narrator of the hadith Ibn Umar says that he heard these things from the Prophet and he thinks that the Prophet also said: "A man is a guardian of the stock of his father and is answerable about that."
The people take trust in a very limited, sense and consider it to mean the protection of others' deposits, although in Allah's religion this has a very broad and unlimited sense.
This is a duty for safeguarding which a Muslim advises another Muslim and in this connection seeks the help of Allah, When a Muslim prepares to go on a journeys his brother prays for him in this way:
"I pray to Allah for your religion, your trust and for the happy ending of your work,"
(Tirmizi)

Hazrat Anas narrates that whenever Allah's Messenger addressed a sermon to us, he invariably repeated this sentence:
"The man has no faith who cannot keep trust and the man who does not respect his promises has no religion."
Since the zenith of achievement and the highest limit of success is to be protected against the hardships of this world and the bad consequences in the Hereafter, the Prophet prays for safety from both the conditions. He has said:

"**O Allah! I seek your shelter from the pangs of hunger, because it is a very bad companion, and I seek your shelter from dishonesty because it is the worst friend."**

(Abu Daud)

Hunger is the name of deprivation in the world and dishonesty is the name of destruction of religion, therefore the Prophet had prayed for being spared from both. Before attaining prophet-hood he was known among the people as AL-Ameen (The Trustworthy).
Similarly the trustworthiness of Moosa (Moses) was observed when he fetched water for the flock of the two daughters of the good old man, had helped them, had respected their womanhood, and had treated them in a decent and gentlemanly way:
"So he watered (their flocks) for them; then he turned back to the shade, and said: "O my Lord I truly am I in (desperate) need of any good that you do send me !".
Afterwards one of the (damsels) came (back) to him, walking bashfully. She said: "My father invites you that he may reward you for having watered (our flocks) for us." So when he came to him and narrated the story, he said: "Do not fear; (well) have you escaped from unjust people."
Said one of the (damsels) :"O my (dear) father I engage him on wages; truly the best of men for you to employ is the (man) who is strong and trusty."
{Qasas.. 24-26}

This event took place when Moosa had not been made Prophet, and was not sent to Pharaohs

And this is not at all surprising because Allah chose only those individuals for being appointed as His Messengers who were the most decent, most honest and righteous, among the people. The self which continues to be attached to the high moral character even after undergoing the extremes of the hardship of poverty and helplessness must be belonging to a very powerful and trustworthy man; and the protection of the rights of God and His slaves demands such character only as does not change in good or bad conditions, and this is the spirit of trustworthiness.

Appointment to High Offices and Posts is a Trust

There is also another sense of trust, and that is: everything should be placed at its proper and deserving place. An office or a post should be offered only to the deserving person; and responsibility should be given only to that person who is able to shoulder it and who has the capability to do justice to the trust placed in him.

Governorship, responsibilities of the party, nation or country, which are granted placing confidence in the persons concerned, are trusts, about which they are answerable. A number of proofs can be advanced in support of this statement.

Hazrat Abu Zar reports that he asked the Prophet whether he would not make him a governor somewhere. Hearing this the Prophet tapped his shoulder and said:

“O Abu Zar ! you are weak, and this responsibility is a trust. On the Day of Judgment it will be a cause of loss of honour and ignominy. However, those people will be spared who will have accepted it with all its responsibilities and would have fulfilled whatever responsibilities they had in this connection.”

(Muslim)

It is a fact that mere excellence of education or experience does not make a person most suitable for some office. It is also possible that a man may have good moral character and a righteous person, but he may not have the capabilities to fulfil the responsibilities of a certain office.

Hazrat Yusuf (Joseph) was a Prophet. He was the living example of righteousness and virtuousness, but he had not offered his services to shoulder the responsibilities of the country on the basis of his righteousness and prophet-hood. He had taken the reins of office in his hand on account of his learning and memory.

“(Yusuf) Said.. 'Entrust to me the treasures of the country. Verily, I am protector and learned.”

(Yusuf.. 55)

Trust demands that we should entrust such responsibilities and posts to such individuals as would be able to run them properly. If through bribery, nepotism and for some other reason we deviate from this principle and we select an unfit person for some office, then since we have ignored a fit person and have appointed an unfit and undeserving person, we have committed open misappropriation.

Allah's Messenger has said that whoever has appointed an administrator through nepotism although there was among the people an individual who was more desirable before Allah than that person, then he has committed misappropriation against Allah, His Messenger and all the Muslims.”

(Hakim) Yazid bin Abi Sufyan reports that when Hazrat Abu Bakr sent him to Syria, he advised him thus: “O Yazid ! You have many relationships. It is likely that you may be influenced by them in making important appointments. I am very much afraid about you since the time the Prophet has said: **'Anyone who has been made responsible for some affair of the Muslims and he has entrusted some responsible job to some ones influenced by his relatives, then Allah's curse on him. No virtue or justice from him will be accepted before Allah, so much so that he will be thrown in the Hell.**

(Hakim)

The community from which the quality of keeping trust is vanished, can be recognised thus: the distribution of posts and offices in that community become a game and play of favours. The value of able men goes down and in their place unfit and undeserving men are appointed. The tradition has it that this forms part of those manifestations of corruption which will appear in the last period.

A man came to the Prophet and asked when the Doomsday would occur. The Prophet answered: “When deposits in trust would start being lost, then wait for the Doomsday.” He was again asked: “What is the meaning of loss of trusts ?” He replied: “When responsibilities are entrusted to unfit persons, then wait for the Doomsday.'s

(Bukhari)

Performance of Duty is also a Trust
This sense is also included in the meaning of trust that the man to whom the responsibility has been entrusted should have the sincere inclination of satisfactorily fulfilling those responsibilities and that he should devote all his energies for doing justice to fulfil it. Undoubtedly it is a trust. Islam considers it worthy of honour that a man should be sincere in his work, should be keen on doing his job in a better way, and should be alive to safeguard the right of the people that are in his charge, for however ordinary that responsibility may be, a slight negligence is likely to cause undue harm to the whole community and society; and the germs of corruption and mischief enter the entire body politic. Dishonesty in performing official duties causes various moral disease in the society. It causes great harm to the religion, to the Muslim public and to the country. This sin, its punishment and its evil appear in different forms.
The Messenger of Allah has said:
"On the Day of Judgment when Allah will gather all the people, past and present, a flag will be fixed for every deceiver, by which he will be recognised. So it will be said that this is the group of such and such deceivers."

(Bukhari)

In another tradition it is stated:
"There will be a flag near the head of every deceiver which he will raise in proportion to his deceit. Listen, there is none worse deceiver than the Amir who deceives the public."
(Muslim)

In other words there will be none more deceitful and deserving of bad consequences than the person who is made responsible for the affairs of men and he sleeps peacefully while the public is undergoing hardships and facing destruction.

Misuse of Office is Betrayal of Trust
Trust demands that if a man is appointed to a certain high office he should not use it for self-aggrandisement or for the benefit of his relatives, for the use of public funds for personal purposes is a crime.
It is a common thing that the governments and the firms give fixed salaries to their employees. Then to find out extra sources of income is disrespectful, ignominious and mean. Allah's Messenger has said:
"Whomsoever we will entrust with service, the provision of his needs is also our responsibility, If he takes more than this then he is committing misappropriation,"

(Abu Daud)

It is misappropriation because he has used that property of the organisation for himself, which was to be given to the weak and the needy, and it was to be spent for a greater cause and purpose:
"If any person is so false, he shall on the Day of Judgment, restore what he misappropriated; then shall every soul receive its due, whatever it earned, and none shall be dealt with unjustly."

(Ale Imran ..161)

But a man who takes care of the commands of Allah in fulfilling his responsibility and he is averse to indulge in dishonest practices in performing his duties, then he is considered by Allah one among the fighters for the supremacy of the religion The Prophet bas laid :
"When the Administrator is given a job, he should receive his due and should pay the dues of others, then he is like a fighter in the cause of Allah till he returns home."

(Tibrani)

Islam has forbidden the exploitation of one's office and taking undue advantage from it. It has been very severe in closing all the avenues of earning illegal wealth.
Adi bin Umaira narrates that he has heard the Prophet as saying:

"Whomsoever we have given some post and he has concealed a needle or a thing smaller than that, then it will be a misappropriated thing with which he will have to appear on the Day of Judgement."
Thereupon a dark-skinned Ansari got up and said: "O Messenger of Allah ! take away my governorship."
The Prophet inquired what was the matter. He replied: "I have heard all your talk just now." The Prophet said: "I still say that whomsoever we may make a governor, he should place everything before us. He should take

(Muslim)

It is said that a man from the tribe of Uzd, called Ibn Labith, was sent as an administrator by the Prophet to collect charity and donations. When he returned with the collection he said: "These are your things and these have been lifted to me." The narrator of the hadith says that hearing this the Prophet stood up and after the praise of God said:
"I appoint, from amongst you, an administrator for these affairs for which Allah has made me responsible. When that man comes back, he says this is for us and this has been gifted to him. If he tells the truth, then why does he not sit in his parents' house, Let us then see from where the gifts come to him? By God, if anyone of you receives even an ordinary thing without it being due, he will have to appear before Allah carrying that thing. I do not want to see anyone of you meeting Allah in this condition that he is carrying a camel on his; head or a cow which is bellowing or a goat that is bleating ." Then he raised his two hands till the whiteness of the armpits was visible and said: "O Allah! I have conveyed your message."
(Muslim)

Wealth and Ability given by Allah are also a Trust

Trust also means that you should take a survey of your powers of perception with which God has blessed you. You should have a look at those special ability which God has given you. If you look at your property and your children, who are very dear to you, you will feel that all these are God's trust which has been deposited with you.
Therefore it is necessary that they should be sacrificed in His cause, and they should be utilised for seeking His pleasure. If you suffer a loss in them, you should not start crying and wailing and you should not consider that it was your personal property that has been taken away from you, because compared to you Allah is the more rightful owner and He has the right to use it in any way He likes. If you are tested by an increase in them, then you should not hesitate to undertake jihad when called upon to do so, and you should not turn away from obedience to Allah on account of them, Or you should not feel conceited on their strength.
"O you who believe ! betray not the trust of Allah and the Messenger, nor misappropriate knowingly things entrusted to you. And know that your possessions and your progeny are but a trial, and that it is Allah with whom lies your highest reward."

(Anfal.. 27-28)

Others' Secrets with you are a Trust

Trust also means that you should protect the rights of the gatherings which you attend. You should not disclose their information and their secrets to others.
A number of relationships are severed, rifts are created in friendships and interests are endangered when the information about or the secrets of the gatherings are disclosed by someone by correctly or incorrectly quoting the source, thus jeopardising all the plans.
Allah's Messenger has said: **"When a man says something to someone and then turns to you, then it is a trust,"**
The confidential talk of the meetings should be guarded, provided it conform to the moral laws and the principles of religion, otherwise its sanctity vanishes, If a Muslim is present in such a meeting where criminals, are conspiring among themselves, so that they may indict some loss on others, then it is his responsibility that he should try to prevent this evil to the best of his ability.
Allah's Messenger has said:
"The secrets of the gatherings are a trust, but three kinds of gatherings are exceptions: one in which haram (illegal) blood is being shed, one in which haram (illegal) sex is being indulged into, or in which property is being illegally usurped. "

(Abu Daud)

The conjugal relations are sacred in the eyes of Islam. The domestic relationship between a husband and wife and their mutual affairs should be fully protected. The closest man should also not be informed about them.
But foolish people relate their private matters and domestic affairs here and there to outsiders. This is a very bad habit and Allah has declared it haram.
Asma binte Yazid reports that she was with the Prophet and a husband and a wife were sitting there. The Prophet said:
"Is there a man who narrates the acts performed with the wife? And is there a wife who relates her relation with her husband to others?' People did not say anything from fear. I said: 'O Messenger of Allah! By God, husbands also do this and wives also do likewise, He said: "Do not say like this, Its example is like a devil-man meeting a devil-woman, and he covers her and performs the sexual act and people are watching. "

The Prophet said : “On the Day of Judgment before Allah the greatest act of misappropriation will be that a man may love his wife and the wife may also be inclined towards her husband and then he may disclose his wife's secrets to others. “

(Muslim)

The deposits which are given to us in trust are for being protected for a fixed period, and then to be returned on demand. We are answerable for these trusts.
While migrating to Medina, the Prophet left behind his cousin so that he may return to the polytheists the deposits kept with him in trust, although these polytheists were the members of the same community which was driving him out of his native place, He was being compelled to leave his home in the cause of his belief, but how can a decent man behave indecently even with indecent and infamous people?
Maimoon bin Mehran says that three kinds of treatment be always meted out to good and bad man alike: keeping trust, fulfilling promise and kindness,
To consider trust as personal property is a wicked act, theft.
Abdullah Ibn Masood says that fighting in the cause of Allah vanishes all the sins except the misappropriation in trust. He says that on the Day of Judgment a person will be brought who had fought in the cause of Allah, would reply: “O Our Lord! how is it possible when the world has ended” Then it would be said: “Take him to Hell.” And in his presence the amounts of trust will be presented in the same form in which they were handed over to him in the world. He would see them and recognise them. He would go after them and seize them and carry them on his shoulders, till he would be under the impression that he has come out, when the trusts would slip from his shoulders, He would again run after them. This act would continue with him forever. Then he said that Salat (prayer) is a trust, Wuzu (ablutions) is a trust, to weigh a thing is a trust, to measure a thing is a trusts and he listed many things and said the greatest trust is that wealth or articles which are deposited or handed over,

The narrator of the hadith says that he went to Bara bin A 'azib and asked him what he thought about What Ibn Masood said, Bara bin A 'azib replied: “He spoke the truth, Did you not hear this command of Allah:
“Allah commands you to render back your trusts to those to whom they are due; and when you judge between man and man that you judge with justice.”

(An-Nissa.. 58)

Keeping trust protects the rights of Allah and those of His slaves. It keeps away men from lowliness and meanness. It reaches the desired heights only when this quality is absorbed by men in their natures and consciousness when it reaches the depths of their hearts and when it is guarded against the influences of close and distant relationships.

This is the meaning of the hadilh narrated by Huzaifa bin Yaman :
“Keeping trust has been naturally ingrained in the depths of men's hearts, Then Quran came and people learned it from Quran and Sunnah.”

(Muslim)

The knowledge of Shariah cannot be indifferent to the righteous conduct, and keeping trust signifies the correct knowledge of Quran and Sunnah as well as a wakeful conscience. If the conscience dies, then the quality of keeping trust is taken away. At such a time the recitation of the Quranic verses and the study of hadith cannot be profitable, but the claimants of Islam think about others and also about themselves that they are the bearers of this quality, but one may ask how can the heart that rejects the truth be expected to keep trust?
For this reason Hazrat Huzaifa has stated that the heart that has no belief loses the quality of keeping trusts.
Accordingly he reports: “Then we started talking about vanishing the quality of keeping trusts and the Prophet said: 'When a man goes to one kind of sleep, the trust is squeezed from his heart till its effect remains equal to a point. Then he goes to another kind of sleep, then the trust shrinks from his heart in such a way as if it were merely a scar,' Then the Prophet said: 'Then people indulge in buying and selling, but no one can give a thing in trust, so much so that it is said that in a certain family there is a trustworthy man, and about him it is said how tolerant, well-behaved and wise he is! although there is not an iota of faith in his heart,”
This hadith draws a horrible picture of vanishing the quality of keeping trust from the hearts of dishonest people, It is like finding sparks of goodness in the nature of some mischievous people sometimes, although they have no influence on their lives. And sometimes the good acts overshadow their evil deeds, but it is clear that these acts cannot revive the dead heart. This conscience-less person appraises men on the basis of his desires and preferences. He does not distinguish between faith and infidelity in them.

Keeping trust is a very important quality, Men with weak faith cannot bear it, Allah has given an example of how its burden bears down man's whole existence, Therefore, it should not be considered an ordinary thing and no laxity should be shown in fulfilling its demands:
"We did indeed offer the Trust to the Heavens and the Earth and the mountains; but they refused to undertake it, being afraid thereof, but man undertook it. he was indeed unjust and foolish."

(Ahzab.. 72)

Injustice and ignorance are two evils which beset man's nature, and man has to face the problem of fighting a jihad against them. His faith cannot be complete Without cleaning and purifying it from injustice.
"If is those who believe and confuse not their beliefs with wrong-that are (truly) in security, for they are on (right) guidance,"

(Ana'am.. 82)

"***Verily, from among the slaves of Allah those who are learned fear Allah."***

(Fatir ..28)

This is the reason why after mentioning man's bearing trust in the foregoing verses of Surah Ahzab, it is said that those who are unjust and ignorant indulge in misappropriation, they are hypocrites and are the deserving recipients of Allah's punishment; and security s granted to men of faith and keepers of trust:
"(With the result) that Allah has to punish the hypocrites, men and women, and the unbelievers, men and women, and Allah turns in mercy to believers, men and women, for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most merciful,"

(Ahzab.. 73)

CHAPTER 9

FULFILLMENT OF PROMISE

Fulfillment of Promise-An essential part of a Muslim's Conduct .

When a Muslim undertakes a thing, he should respect the undertaking. When he enters into any contract he should honor it till the last. This is the demand of the faith that when a man talks of any enterprise, he should have the intention of taking it to completion, like the water which does not rest till it flows down to the lower level. He should be known among the people as a man of reliable promises, and there should be no fear of any breach of promises or of any dubious dealings from him.

Fulfillment of the promise is necessary. Similarly when an oath is taken, it should be redeemed. But this fulfillment of promise or the redeeming of the oath and pledges is necessary when the dealing is legitimate and concerns truth, otherwise honoring the promise in connection with something sinful and disobedience to Allah has no value, and there is no importance of oath in sin.

Allah's Messenger has said:

"If some one has taken an oath, but saw an aspect of goodness in another thing, he may break his oath and pay compensation (atonement), and should perform the act which is better and has goodness."

(Muslim)

It is not proper for a man to insist on redeeming the oath. On such occasions it is better to break the oath. In a *hadith* it is stated:

"It is sinful for a man among you to go to his wife with his oath (unredeemed) compared to his paying the compensation (atoning) which He has fixed for breaking the oath."

(Bukhari)

For this reasons no promise and covenant is proper and correct except in rightful matters. When a man has promised to do a certain good thing, then he should try his best to fulfill it, as long as it appears good to him. He should very well know that he should stick to manly talk, faith and belief. There is no room in this for breach of promises or doubts and hesitation.

Anas bin Malik says that his uncle Anas bin Nadar could not take part in the battle of Badr, and he said to the Prophet: "O Messenger of Allah! In the first battle that you fought with the polytheists I could not take part. If Allah kept me with the Prophet then they will definitely see my achievements in the second battle against the polytheists."

When in the battle of Uhad, there was fierce fighting and the Muslims were retreating. He prayed to Allah: "O Allah! I ask your pardon for the mistake that they have committed, and I declare myself innocent of the transgression of the polytheists". Saying this he rushed into the battle. In the way he met Sa'ad bin Ma'az whom he said: "O Sa'ad bin Ma'az! By the God of Nadar, Proceed towards Paradise. I smell its fragrance , in the valley of Uhad."

Sa'ad said: "O Messenger of Allah! The love for rnartyrdom, which he showed, cannot be expressed. Then he advanced."

Anas says that we found more than eighty wounds on his body, which were caused by swords, the points of lances and the shower of arrows. The polytheists had disfigured his body and it was difficult to identify him. With great difficulty his sister identified him with the help of a mole on his fingers.

Anas says that he thinks that the following verses were revealed about him or about persons like him:

"Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allah " of them some have completed their vow to (the extreme), and some (still) wait; but they have never changed (their determination) in the least."

(*Ahzab* .. 23)

Memory and Determination-essential for Fulfillment of Promise

Fulfillment of promises depends on two factors. With these two things, fulfilling one's promises would be easy. Allah had taken a promise from Adam that he would not go near the forbidden tree, but Adam forgot the promise within a few days. He became a prey to weakness and broke his promise:

"We had already beforehand taken the covenant of Adam, but he forgot,. and We found on his part no firm resolve."

(Taha: 115)

It shows that deficiency in memory and weakness of determination are two obstructions, which come in the way of performance of duty. And this is a strange thing that man, being overwhelmed by the hardships of the times, various difficulties and different pressing problems forgets the open and clear realities. To him the clear figures appear blurred, and the realities which are as striking as the light of the sun disappear from his sight.

There the necessity of a reminder becomes very pressing, to overcome the negligence and forgetfulness, and to keep this important thing before men's eyes. There are a number of verses of the Quran which were revealed for safeguarding the memory:

"Follow the revelation given to you from your Lord, and follow not, as friends or protectors, other than Him. Little it is you remember of admonition."

(A'araf: 3)

"This is the way of your Lord, leading straight; We have detailed the signs for those who receive admonition."

(Ana'am: 126)

"And the raiment of righteousness-that is the best. Such are among the signs of Allah, that they may receive admonition."

(A'nrnf: 26)

"Thus shall We raise up the dead; so that you may remember,"

(A'araf.. 57)

Alive and wakeful memory and remembrance is essential for fulfilling promises. A man who forgets his promises and covenants, how can he fulfill them? That is why the following verse has been ended on a note of admonition after giving command of fulfilling them:

"And fulfill the Covenant of Allah; thus does He command you, that you may remember”

(Ana'am.. 152)

If a man has a strong memory in respect of fulfilling his promise, it is also necessary that he should have a determination to do so, a determination which should not have any laxity or slackness in this matter a determination which should be able to overcome all the rebellious desires, and which should lighten the coming burden of difficulties, It should be a determination which should be able to cross all the difficult valleys and blocks and should be able to set an example of selfless sacrifice for others.

The measures for weighing and appraising people are different with different people. The price one has to pay for remaining faithful sometimes is very high,

At times one requires to sacrifice all the wealth, property and the most desired thing in this respect.

But these difficulties, sacrifices and trials of determination prove in the end to be the steps for achieving greatness and honor, as the poet says:

"Why he, who considers his life and heart dear, should go to (seek) the beloved in her street."

The holy Quran . has severely criticized those who seek to achieve heights of success and glory In the shadow of comfortable living:

"***Do you think that you will enter paradise without such trials as came to those who passed away before you? They experienced suffering and adversity and were so shaken in spirit that even the prophet and the faithful who were with him cried: 'When will Allah's help come ?' Ah ! Verily, Allah's help is near."***

(Baqarah : 214)

When a man develops in himself the combined forces of a conscious and wakeful mind and a heart full of determination, then he can be considered to have been qualified to enter the group of the faithful people.

The Greatest Covenant

For a Muslim the most honorable and the holiest covenant is the one which he has made with his Lord, for Allah has created him with His Power. He has nourished him under the shadow of his favors and blessings, and has demanded of him that he should recognize what is the reality and admit it. No misguiding factors should cause him to deviate from the right path lest he may deny these realities or he may lose sight of them:

"Did I not enjoin on you, 0 you children of Adam! that you should not worship Satan.. for that he was to you an enemy avowed? And that you should worship Me, (for that) this was the straight way?"

(Yasin: 60-61)

Those who do not listen to the prophets and do not follow their teachings, in their nature also there is a motivator which pricks them, shows them the path of their Lord, and tries to make them realize the greatness of the Creator, however corrupt and polluted the environment may be :

This is the meaning of this covenant which Allah has taken from all the humans:

"When your Lord drew forth from the children of Adam-from their loins-their descendants, and made them testify concerning themselves, (saying).. . Am I not your Lord (Who cherishes and sustains you)?' They said: .Yes, we do

'Our fathers before us may have taken false gods but we are (their) descendants after them.. will you then destroy us because of the deeds of men who were futile?' Thus do We explain the signs in detail in order that they may turn (to Us)."

(A'araf: 172-174)

Here no regular dialogues had taken place as is clear from the apparent sense of these verses, but this is a picture of the right-natured people showing how they are mindful of Allah, how they recognize Him, how they discover His Oneness and Greatness from the proofs scattered in the universe, and shun from all the conventional customs and habits which keep men away from this Lord, and which associate some one with Allah. This style of speech and writing is common in the Arabic language.

With honoring this Covenant, a man's faithfulness is the foundation of his respect and honor in this world and of success and glory in the next world.

It is an undue misgiving and fear from Allah that we should fulfill the covenant made with Him and still be apprehensive that some disaster would befall us :

" Recall the favor, which I bestowed on you, and fulfill your Covenant with Me " I will fulfill My Covenant with you, and fear none but Me."

The Prophet used to give these instructions to the tribes which came to him, while conveying the Message of Islam, and used to place before them only a few aspects in the beginning according to the intellectual and physical capacities of the people instead of giving them the complete teachings.

Auf bin Malik says that he was with the Prophet when there were about seven, or eight or nine persons present. He asked us : "**Will you not take a pledge on the hand of the Messenger of Allah ?" We stretched our hands and said: "We take a pledge on your hand, a Messenger of Allah !"**

He said: "(Your pledge is) That you should worship Allah. Do not associate anybody with Him, and offer *salat* for five times and listen and obey." And he said in a low voice: "And do not ask for anything from the people."

Auf bin Malik says: "I saw some of these persons who had taken pledge that when their hunter fell on the ground, they did not ask anybody to pick it up and give it to them."

(Muslim)

How scrupulously the pledge is being observed and how severely and strictly it is being enforced! There was no special significance of this pledge. Every group used to be instructed according to its nature and circumstances. The ruler used to be advised not to be cruel. The trader used to be instructed not to indulge in adulteration and deceit, and the employees were admonished against accepting bribes. Otherwise every Muslim is bound to follow the entire religion, all its tenets and principles, and he will be asked on the Day of Judgment about the entire Shariah. However, in the Islamic world there have appeared a few sects which take a pledge of a special kind. They should not be entertained. They are like quacks who pose as physicians. They administer spurious drugs and complicate the disease and endanger the life of their patient.

Islamic teachings cannot be divided and distributed. All of them must be followed, and their enforcement is necessary in every place at every time.

The Ideal Pledge of Ansar

Allah's Messenger took a pledge from the Ansar that they will support this Message with their lives and properties, and try their utmost in protecting the Prophethood, till the time the Message is conveyed to the Arabs and the Non-Arabs.

The Covenant entered into by the Ansar is considered as the most glorious pact in the annals of belief. In sincerity, selfless devotion and total submission to Truth. no other parallel can be found.

This covenant was completed in a glorious night of the season of Hajj. After this, people went their way and busied themselves in their affairs. But the people who had pledged their words busied themselves in fulfilling this historical covenant, and they accepted willingly all its demands and challenges.

In the Battle of Badr and in other battles of Islam against idolatry they shed their blood like water. The Prophet had great confidence in this covenant for the supremacy of the religion in times of difficulty and for raising the world of Allah. Accordingly when in the first assault in the Battle of Hunain Muslims were falling back, the Prophet did not look at the armies of the newcomer Muslims, but called his old faithful who had taken a pledge in the valley in the night of the season of Hajj, so that they may take the control of the situation.

Anas narrates that when the Battle of Hunain was fought, the tribes of Hawazan and Ghatfan participated in the fighting with their wealth, equipment and sons. The Prophet had an army of ten thousand men, which also included the indebted men at the time of victory of Mecca, but all left him. He was all alone.

At that time he gave a second call. He turned towards his right and called: "0 People of Ansar !" They said: "We are present, 0 Messenger of Allah! We are with you, rest assured." The Prophet was riding a gray mule. He got down from it and said: "I am a slave of Allah and His Messenger."

The polytheists were defeated and much booty was collected by the Islamic army. The Prophet distributed the booty among the newcomers who accepted Islam on the day Mecca was conquered and among the Muhajereen (refugees). He did not distribute anything among the Ansars. The Ansar were a little perturbed. They talked among themselves: when the situation was critical we were called and when the booty came to hand it is distributed among others. When the Prophet came to know about this he gathered them and asked:

"O People of Ansar ! What news am I hearing from your side 1" They remained silent. Then he &aid: "O People of Ansar ! Do you not like that others should take away the worldly goods with them, and you should return with Muhammed (Pbuh) to your house." They answered: "Why not O Messenger of Allah! We are pleased." The Prophet said: "If people walk in one valley and the Ansar in another valley, then I will walk in the valley of Ansar."

(Bukhari)

The fact of the matter is that this great Message needed the sharpness of the swords of Ansar. They fulfilled their promise by sacrificing their lives and everything that they had. They did not have before them the ephemeral profits of this world, nor any temporary pleasures and advantages.

The policy of the Prophet in distributing the booty of the battle was based on the levels of their sincerity and faith. The Bedouin who became Muslims at a later stage were in need of financial help so that they might not be disheartened by the difficulties coming in their way as a consequence of embracing Islam. Therefore. the Prophet wanted to give them re-assurance and comfort, and because the Ansar were endowed with full faith and unshaken belief, the Prophet left them to their condition.

In such conditions the Prophet has said:

"I give some things to a man so that he may not (on account of his bad deeds) be thrown into hell by Allah, although there are other persons more dear to me."

(Bukhari)

Forgetting the Past is a kind of Breach of Promise

The praiseworthy quality of the fulfilling of promise also demands that a man should always remember his past, so that he may take a lesson from it for his present and future. If he was a poor man and Allah has made him rich, or he was a sick man and now Allah has made him healthy, then it is not proper for him to erect a strong wall between his past and present and should not think that he was never poor nor was he ever-healthy, and should not build up his present on the basis of this pride. Such a behavior is open ingratitude and immoral.

This is a breach of promise which leads man to disruption. Many times such a man gets away from the blessings of Allah, and after this he does not get the guidance and inclination to come under the shadow of this blessing.

It is said that in Medina a man, known as Sa'alba, went to a meeting of Ansar, and keeping them as witness declared that if AIIah blessed him with favor, he would pay the dues of every rightful claimant, would give money in charity and would show kindness to his relatives. Incidentally his cousin died and he inherited all his property. He however did not fulfill his promise nor did he care for what he had declared. Thereupon AIIah revealed the following verses:

"Amongst them are men who made a Covenant with Allah, that if he bestowed on them of His bounty, they would give (largely) in charity, and be truly amongst those who are righteous. But when He did bestow of His bounty, they became covetous, and turned back (from their covenant), averse (from its fulfillment). He has put as a consequence hypocrisy into their hearts, (to last) till the day whereon they shall meet Him.. because they broke their Covenant with Allah, and because they lied (again and again). Do they not know that Allah does know their secret (thoughts) and their secret counsels, and that Allah knows well all things unseen ?"

(Tauba.. 75-78)

The worst example of breach of promise, ingratitude and disloyalty is that tale of Bani Israel which Hazrat Abu Huraira has quoted from the sayings of the Prophet. The Prophet has said:

“There were three persons in Bani Israel, a leper, a bald man and a blind man. Allah wanted to test them. He sent an angel to everyone of them. The angel who went to the leper asked him what he coveted most. He replied: "Fair complexion, beautiful skin and a cure for my disease, for which I am hated by the people." The angel touched his body with his band and his leprosy was removed and he became the owner of a fair complexion and a beautiful skin. The angel again asked him: "What thing you like most 1" He said: "Camel." The angel gave him a pregnant she-camel and prayed: "May Allah increase this property of yours."

Then he went to the blind man and asked him what he coveted most. He replied: "May Allah give me back my sight," The angel touched his eyes and his sight ~'as restored. He asked for the second time as to what thing he liked most. He replied: "A goat." The angel gave him a pregnant goat.

Then he went to the bald man and asked him what thing he liked most. The bald man replied: "Beautiful hair, and my ugliness be removed as people run away from me." The angel touched him and his disease was cured and he had a tuft of beautiful hair. Then he asked him what thing he liked most. He answered: "A cow." The angel gave him a pregnant cow and prayed to Allah to give him prosperity.

All the three animals gave birth to their offshoots. Their numbers increased. One had a flock of camels, the second one had a large number of cows and the third one became the owner of many goats.

Then the angel appeared before the leper in the form of a man and said: "I am a poor man. All my' relatives have been separated from me in the journey, and now my only support is Allah and through Him you. I request you in the name of the Being who gave you fair complexion and a beautiful skin, to give me a camel. Will you help me in this journey of mine ?" He replied that there is an abundance of rights. The angel said: "1 recognize you. Were you not suffering from leprosy and people were hating you ? Were you not needy and Allah gave you lot of property ?"

He replied: "No. This property I received from my father and grandfather in inheritance." The angel said: "If you are a liar, then may Allah return you to your old condition."

'In the same form he went to the bald man and talked to him in the same manner. He also gave the same reply which the first one had given. The angel then gave a curse and said that if he was a liar then may Allah return him to his old condition.

Then he went to the blind man and talked to him in the same manner, and begged for a goat to be given to him. The blind man said: "I was really a blind man, but Allah restored my sight. You may take away whatever you like and leave whatever you want to leave. By God, I cannot enter into any dispute with you about a thing which I have taken by Allah's pleasure." The angel told him to keep his things with him. The purpose was merely to test them. Allah was pleased with him and his two companions became the victims of His wrath.

(Bukhari)

In trade, business, and other financial and economic matters an atmosphere of confidence can be created only when the fulfillment of promise is considered a duty.

It is necessary that the written conditions should' conform to the limits of the Shariah, otherwise there would be no sanctity in them, and a Muslim will not be bound to honor them.

Islam has given extra consideration to the marriage contract. Allah's Messenger has said: "Among the conditions which you mutually agree upon, the most deserving of fulfillment is the contract by which you make the private parts *halal* (permissible) for yourselves."

For this reason it is not lawful for a husband to manipulate a single *dirham* that rightfully belongs to his wife, or to consider the bond with which he is tied as unimportant.

It is mentioned in the *hadith:* "If a man has married a woman for a small or a big dower (mehr) and in his heart he has the intention of not paying that dower, then he has deceived her. If he dies and he has not paid her right, then on the Day of Judgment he will be presented before Allah as a rapist. And a man who has borrowed money from another man while he did not have the intention of re-paying the debt, then he has deceived him, and consequently he defrauded him. If he dies in this condition, without paying back his debt, then he will meet Allah as a thief." (Tibrani) There is nothing surprising about this, as there are a number of Quranic verses which insist on fulfilling the promises and warn against indulging in disloyalty and breach of promises:

"And fulfill your promise. Verily, you will be answerable for your promises."

***(Isra:* 34)**

"And fulfill the covenant of Allah when you have entered into it, and break not your oaths after you have confirmed them.. Indeed you have made Allah your surety.. for Allah knows all that you do."

Allah clarifies that breach of promises and disloyalty destroy confidence, create disorder and disruption, cut relationships, reduce power and make individuals weak and low:

"And be not like a woman who breaks into untwisted strands the yarn which she has spun, after it has become strong. Nor take your oaths to practice deception between yourselves, lest one party should be more numerous than another: for Allah will test you by this.. and on the Day of Judgment He will certainly make clear to you (the truth of) that where in you disagree."

(*Nahl:* 92)

Many times a man enters into a contract, but breaks it in the greed of more profit elsewhere. Or one nation makes an agreement with another nation, but the greed of better advantages and other considerations compel her to break the agreement. The religion considers it highly objectionable that for the sake of a temporary benefit virtuousness be trampled, and deception and trickery should enter in the dealings among men. Islam makes it compulsory for an individual as well as a group to be honest, decent and sincere, so that in all the-" conditions of poverty and riches, and victory and defeat the covenants be safeguarded. That is why after giving a command to honor the covenants, Quran says:

" *And take not your oaths to practice deception between yourselves, with the result that some one's foot may slip after it was firmly planted.. and you may have to taste the evil (consequences) of having hindered (men) from the path of Allah, and a mighty wrath descend on you. Nor sell the Covenant of Allah for a miserable price.. for with Allah* is *(a prize) far better for you, if you only knew."*

(*Nahl..* 94-95)

The Entire Humanity deserves Fulfillment of Promise

The promise given to everybody should be fulfilled, whether the other party is a Muslim or an infidel, for morality, greatness and righteousness cannot be cut into pieces, that some people are treated with meanness and others are treated decently.

The fulfillment of promise and covenant depends on truth and straight dealing. As long as it is based on righteousness, it should be fulfilled in relation to every individual and at every time.

In connection with the covenants with Non-Muslims the Prophet is reported to have said that if in the time of Islam he were invited to enter into such a contract, he would gladly accept the offer.

A'mar bin Al-Hamaq says that he has heard the Messenger of Allah as saying:

"If a man gave shelter to a man for life, and subsequently killed him, then I have no connection with the killer, even if the murdered person be an infidel. "

(Ibn Habban)

This statement of the Prophet shows how Islam treats even those who have not accepted it as their religion. On the other hand the behavior of the Jews is worth noting. They do not like to fulfill their promises with others. They do not consider it a good thing to treat others justly and decently. They consider them- selves' Allah's son and His favorite'. Their belief is that Allah has reserved his blessing and shelter for the Jewish race only. As against this, have a look at the Islamic teachings. It makes complete arrangements for safeguarding all those whose responsibility it has assumed, and with whom it has entered into a covenant. Quran addresses the Mulims and speaks about the infidels thus:

"0 you who believe! violate not the sanctity of the symbols of Allah, nor of the sacred month, nor of the animals

seeking of the bounty and good pleasure of their Lord. But when you are clear of the sacred precincts and of pilgrim garb, you may hunt, and let not the hatred of some people in (once) shutting you out of the sacred mosque lead you to transgression (and hostility on your part). Help one another in righteousness and piety and do not help one another in sin and rancor." (Maida: 3)

It is remarkable how beautifully the viewpoint of the non-believers and their beliefs have been stated. Although they are idolaters, yet they have been mention- ed as seekers of Allah's pleasure and blessings, and Muslims, however powerful they may become, they have been asked to co-operate with one another in the acts of righteousness and piety and not to help one another in .the acts of sin and rancor.

At another place we have taken a survey of the covenants between Muslims and Non-Muslims and the revealed teachings of Allah in this connection. (Refers to a book in Arabic by the author)

Re-payment of Debt is Necessary One of the things on which Islam has insisted most and has considered it very important is the re-payment of loan. With Allah, right behavior in this respect is more important than attending to other rights. Islam has ended all the misgivings and avarice and greed which make the debtor their victim, as a result of which he tries to find excuses to avoid re-payment or finally does Dot re-pay.

In this connection Islam has advised that a loan should be taken only in inevitable circumstances. To try to borrow money in a matter where it is avoidable is a very dangerous thing, and it should be avoided. In one *hadith* it is mentioned that it is one of those sins for which retribution is necessary.

"When a borrower dies, he will be subjected to retribution on the Day of Judgment. However, in three cases it is permitted: first when a man loses his strength fighting in the cause of Allah and borrows in order to prepare to fight against his and Allah's enemies, secondly when a man near whom a Muslim has died and he borrows to meet the expenses of his funeral, and third the man who is afraid that he would remain unmarried and to safe-guard his religion he borrows to meet the expenses of marriage. Allah will pardon them on the Day of Judgment."

(Ibne Maja)

In another tradition it is stated that Allah's Messenger has said:

"On the Day of Judgment Allah will call the borrower and he will be made to stand before Him. Then he will be asked: "O son of Adam I For what purpose did you take the loan? And why did you waste the rights of others ?" He will reply: "O our Lord I You know that I had borrowed, but I did not eat it, nor drank, nor wasted it, but sometimes an accident of fire occurred, sometimes there was a theft or it was lost, or a loss was incurred." Allah will say:

"O My slave! You have told the truth. I have more right to re-pay it." Allah will call for some acts of virtue and will weigh them in a balance, and his acts of virtue will be heavier than his evil acts, and he will enter the Paradise with the favor of his Lord."

(Ahmed)

This shows that Allah will accept the excuses of those who were compelled to borrow being forced by the circumstances, and were unable to re-pay it on account of various genuine difficulties,

But there are men who are the slaves of their carnal desires and pleasures, and whose own wealth is not sufficient to meet the demands of their desires; they at once rush to borrow money, regardless of the consequences. They do not care to be free of this burden of loan, Such a person according to the *hadith* is a shameless thief.

Allah's Messenger has said:

“He who takes others' property (as a loan) with intention of repaying it, (then is unable to repay) then Allah repays his loan. And he who takes a loan with the intention of not re-paying it, then Allah will destroy and ruin him,"

(Bukhari)

Islam wants that the loans should be given different kinds of guarantees, so that they may be considered live properties, and their re-payment should become definite and essential, and nobody should be able to escape re-paying this due, committed to writing, although performance of other acts of worship earns great rewards.

Abu Qatawa says that one person asked:

. . "O Messenger of Allah I If I am killed in the cause of Allah, will all my sins be pardoned ?" He replied: "Yes, If you are killed, and If you are patient, thankful and seeker of Allah s pleasure, If you remain in the front ranks and attack the enemy and do not retreat." Then the Prophet asked him what did he say. The person repeated his question and the Prophet replied: "Your sins will be pardoned, but your loan will not be pardoned. Just now Jibrail has informed me about this."

(Muslim)

Since the wise people knew how the debt falls as a lightning on a Muslim's honor and his earnings for the Hereafter, they used to advise people to get themselves free from all debts before putting their lives in danger.

It is narrated through Abu Darda that while proceeding for a *jihad,* the Prophet used to stop at a junction of the streets and shout to the soldiers

"O people! If anybody has to repay a debt and if he feels that he would die in the battle and the debt would not be repaid, then he should return. He need not come after me, because this thing will not be enough to save him from hell."

(Razin)

Today the Muslims have made borrowing and lending an amusement. To satisfy their hunger and the sexual desires they take loan, and they indulge into paying interests to the Jews and the Christians, which Allah has totally prohibited as *haram.* As a result of this they have become aliens in their own land, and they are deprived of their properties and are wandering helplessly.

Re-payment of loan is very difficult.

How many rights would have been trampled, if there were no fear of the law enforcement!

Allah likes those of His slaves who fulfill their covenants, and after destroying a number of townships, has stated about them:

“ We did not find most of them true to their covenant,. and most of them We found rebellious and disobedient.

(A'araf.. 102)

CHAPTER 10

SINCERITY

Man's Acts depend on his Intentions

The motivations and the factors which prompt a man to do a job in a better way, to strive hard and bear all the trials and tribulations and induce him to sacrifice his property and life for a thing, are many and varied.

One motivation is such that it manifests itself with the man's interest and involvement in his work, while there is another motivation which remains hidden in the interior recesses of the heart and cannot be discerned from outside.

Many times the man who performs the act does not recognize it although he is influenced by it and the secret of his acceptance or non-acceptance of a thing is hidden in that.

The normal human nature decides what are the general rules of treatment in certain case. You can very easily determine what are the motivations of a particular person in acting in a certain manner by looking him at work. He will be seen either involved in self-love and self-preservation or greed for more wealth would be troubling him, or the feelings of pride and self-importance would be giving him sleepless nights, or hypocrisy, and desire for fame would be inciting him to advance forward.

Hear what the people talk about. Take a survey of their daily activities. You will not find anything else the axis of their talk and efforts but their feelings of joy and hatred, pride and conceit.

Islam judges the acts and deeds, and decides about their importance on the basis of the intentions, feelings and sensations behind them. For Islam the value of an act depends on the nature of the motivation which prompted the act to be performed.

Sometimes a man gives costly donations and gifts so that through these good acts should be attracted towards him and should talk about his generosity, and sometimes his purpose is to give valuable presents to that person who had treated him in a commendable way and had (bilge) him.

Both these acts are of charity and generosity, which were guided by, as pointed out by the psychologists, by the man's consciousness directly or indirectly. But Islam does not give importance to charity if it is given in a hypocritical way or for attaining fame, and unless

it is given entirely for seeking the pleasure of Allah:

"We are feeding you for the-sake of Allah. We do not expect from you any compensation nor thanks.'"

(Dahr.. 9)

"Those who spend their wealth for increase in self-purification, and have in their minds no favor from anyone for which a reward is expected in return. but only the desire to .seek the pleasure of their Lord, Most High, and soon will they attain (complete) satisfaction..'

(A/-Lai/: **18-2/)**

To correct the inclinations of the heart and to keep . it away from the superficial desires, the Prophet has said:

"The acts depend on intentions. A man will get whatever he had intended for. So the man whose migration will be for the sake of Allah and His Messenger, his migration will be for Allah and His Messenger. But if anybody migrates with the intention of earning the world or to marry a certain woman then his migration will be counted for the purpose for which he has left his house."

(Bukhari)

The distance between Mecca and Medina is traversed by thousands of travelers for different purposes, but the purpose of attaining supremacy for the religion and for keeping oneself alive is the thing which distinguishes between a *Mahajir* (refugee) and a common traveler, although the acts of both the person are the same.

The man who left Mecca to go to Medina so that he I may save his religion from the various dangers, and that

he may form a new government in a new city, was called a *Mahajir* (refugee), but another person who traveled for another purpose he has no connection with the *hijrat* (migration).

Purity of Purpose is of Importance The rightness of intention and sincerity are the two things Which elevate a man's worldly action and make a prayer that is answered.

But if there is perversion in the intention and corruption in the heart, a man, in spite of offering prayers, is degraded. He commits sins and inspite of his Showing interest in and taking pains for performing worship is doomed to failure and loss.

But as against this many times a man builds high and lofty palaces, Constructs broad and Spacious buildings , lays out a beautiful garden full of fruits, and starts living in this paradise, and he is called a king. But since in his efforts and labor of building these high and lofty palaces, etc. the purpose was to benefit humanity, then for these acts he will be a recipient of an unending

reward (sawab).

Allah's Messenger has said:

"Anybody Who, without Subjecting another person to cruelty Or aggression, builds a magnificent building, or plants saplings without indulging into Cruelty and rancor, he will be getting reward for that till the time Allah's creatures would be benefited by them."

(Ahmed)

In another tradition it is stated:

'If a Muslim lays a garden or does farming, and if a bird or a man eats something from it, then he will get a virtue (neki) in its place."

(Muslim)

Even carnal pleasures are also counted as acts of prayer; if behind them there is righteous intention and clean purpose. When a man goes to his wife so that he may be able to save his chastity, and protect his faith, he gets a recompense for this act.

Whatever he feeds his body, or whatever he does to sustain his wife and children, for that also he gets reward, provided there is goodness and righteousness in his intention.

Sa'ad lbn Abi Waqas narrates that the Messenger of Allah has said: "If you spend even an ordinary thing for seeking the pleasure of Allah, you get its reward, so much so that even putting a morsel of food in the mouth of your wife is a virtuous act."

Another tradition has it :

"Whatever you feed your father, it is a charity from you. Whatever you feed your child, it is a means of reward for you, and whatever you feed your servant, it is also a charity from you,"

(Ahmed)

The fact is that as long as man keeps himself as an obedient slave of Allah and his intention is pure and sincere, then all his acts and movements, his sleep and his waking are considered to be for seeking the pleasure of Allah, And sometimes it so happens that a man wants to perform a righteous act, but on account of his poverty he is unable to do so, then Allah, who knows the secrets of hearts, gives the man desirous of reform the honor of a reformer, the man desirous of fighting in the cause of Allah the honor of a *Mujahid* (the fighter in the cause of Allah), because for Him high courage and righteous intention is more appreciable

than the want of resources.

During the days of scarcity and poverty a battle was tJ to be fought. Some people came to the Prophet with a view to joining his forces and offered themselves to be sacrificed in the cause of Allah. But Allah's Messenger did not allow them to take part in the *jihad* because of their incapability. They returned with a heavy heart and sorrowfully. They were very much grieved for not being allowed to participate in *jihad.* About them the following verses were revealed:

" Nor (is there blame) on those who came to you to be provided with mounts, and when you said: I can find no mounts for you,' they turned back, their eyes steaming with tears of grief that they had no resources wherewith to provide the expenses."

(Tauba: 92) ;

Do you think that a firm and strong faith and belief would be wasted? And this burning desire for sacrifice would be just lost? No, never. For this reason the Prophet appreciated their faith, and said to the soldiers going with him:

"There are some people whom we have left ,behind in Medina; in whatever place or valley we may camp, they will be with us. For them their excuse is enough."

(Bukhari)

As their intentions were honest, they were the recipients of the reward *(sawab)* of the *mujahedeen* (fighters), because they had stayed in Medina against the wishes of their hearts and with great unwillingness.

If this is the achievement of the honest intention that the person having it is so favored, then the dishonest intention also earns the punishment reserved for the bad deed, although apparently the act was righteous. Such hypocrisy has been condemned:

"So woe to the worshippers who are neglectful of their prayers, those who (want but) to be seen (of men), but refuse (to supply) (even) neighborly needs."

(AI-Ma'un : 4-7)

The prayer based on hypocrisy is considered a sin, because after losing the essential sincerity it has become dead, and is, therefore, useless. Similar is the case of zakat. If it is paid merely to seek Allah's plea- sure then it can be acceptable

" Waste not your charity by reminders of your generosity or by injury-like him who spends his wealth to be seen by men and believes not in Allah and the Last Day. His likeness is the likeness of a rock on which there is (some) dust of earth.. on it heavy rainfalls, which leaves it a bare stone. They will be able to do nothing with anything they have earned."

(Baqarah: 264)

The heart which is bereft of sincerity cannot be acceptable, as the rock with some dust on it cannot grow any grain when rain falls on it.

If the kernel is rotten, beautiful outer skin will not be of any use.

However, if the self is full of sincerity, then its blessing helps to make an ordinary thing as weighty as a mountain. If it is devoid of sincerity, then what re- ward can mounds of chaff and husks achieve from Allah ?

That is why Allah's Messenger has said:

"Make your faith pure; a little (righteous) act will be sufficient to save you from hell."

(AI-Hakim)

In the *hadilh* the reward for virtuous acts has been mentioned to be from ten times to hundred times, depending on the performer's intention and sincerity hidden in his heart, which is known only to that Being who knows about all the manifest as well as hidden things. Accordingly the reward increases according to the sincerity and "honesty of the intentions.

The external acts of man can neither achieve the pleasure of Allah nor the grandeur of the worldly life. Allah gives his attention to his faithful and sincere slaves and accepts only those of their acts which bring them nearer to Him. As regards the worldly show and human trappings, they have no importance and no value.

The Prophet has said:

"Allah does not see your bodies nor does he look at your faces, but he sees your hearts."

(Muslim)

It is mentioned in the *hadith* :

"When doomsday would occur, the deeds done in the world will be presented to Allah. From them the acts performed for Allah will be separated. And 8J the other acts performed for other purposes will be thrown into the fire of hell."

(Baihaqui

One who would adopt these realities in one's life would experience relief and comfort in this world and would also achieve eternal bliss in the Hereafter. He will not be harmed by the loss of anything nor will he grieve for any act.

The Prophet has said:

"The man who has left his world in the condition that he had performed acts sincerely for the one and only Allah, had established prayer and had paid zakat, then Allah is pleased with him."

(Ibn Maja)

This *hadith* is in conformity with these words of Allah:

" And they have been commanded no more than this ; to worship Allah, offering Him sincere devotion being true (in faith) to establish regular prayer.. and to practice regular charity; and that is the religion, right and straight."

(Baiyina .. 5)

Sincerity is the Desired Thing

In the times of scarcity and adversity the rays of sincerity throw their light with full force. At such times man separates himself from his carnal desires and yearnings. He severs his relations with their defects and errors. He repents before Allah and weeps and wails and prays for His blessings. He shakes from the fear of Allah's wrath.

The holy Quran has drawn a very fine picture of such a man, who is surrounded by adversities, who out of fear has forgotten all his mischief's and is appealing to his Merciful Lord so that He may lift him out of this

mire:

"Say: 'Who is it that delivers you from the dark recesses of land and sea, when you call upon Him in meekness and silent terror.. if He only delivers us from these (dangers), (we vow) or shall truly show our gratitude?' "Say:' It is Allah that delivers you from these all (other) distresses; and yet you run after false gods' ?"

(AI An'am: 63-64)

This sincerity is temporary. Those conditions which befall a man and sometimes do not befall, how can they be called moral conduct? Allah wants that He should be truly and correctly known and recognized and should be respected and honored in good or bad condition, as deserving of Him. People should give their due place to honest and sincere intention and good conduct in their lives. Their attachment to these qualities should be strong and should not break at any time, and they should not make any other thing but selfless- ness and Allah's pleasure as an ideal to follow in their life.

This heat of sincerity dies down gradually as passion for greed for wealth, self-love, egotism, hunger for position and office, hypocrisy and desire to be famous increases. But to Allah only that act is desirable which is free from all these undesirable impurities:

"Surely, pure religion is for Allah only."

(Zumar: 3)

The example of the superior nature is like that of a ripe fruit, which requires to be protected from diseases and mishaps in order to preserve its sweetness and cleanness.

For this reason Islam has considered hypocrisy in righteous acts as most abominable and has declared it as *shirk*, associating some one else with Allah.

The truth is : this hypocrisy destroys all acts as white ants destroy slowly all things they come in contact with. When the habit of hypocrisy takes roots in any man's dealings, as germs of an infectious disease spread in the society, then it becomes a sort of idolatry and throws its practitioner into the fire of hell.

The Prophet has said:

"A little hypocrisy is also polytheism. He who is hostile to Allah's friends, he openly declares a war against Allah. Allah likes those who are righteous, who fear him and who pray secretly, those who would not be missed if they disappear and would not be recognized if they are present. Their hearts are the lamps of guidance. They remove darkness from every piece of land."

(Hakim)

Ibn Abbas narrates that one man asked the Prophet: "0 Messenger of Allah! I take up a stand with the intention of seeking Allah's pleasure, and I wish that the people of my country should see it. What do you think of it 1" The following verses were revealed before the Prophet gave an answer:

"Whoever expects to meet his Lord, let him work righteousness, and in the worship of his Lord. admit no one as partner."

(Kahf: 110)

The severe criticism and attacks which Islam has unleashed on the evils emanating from hypocrisy and want of sincerity is because it is a kind of corruption that is not discernible, and keeps the carnal desires and the wicked wishes of the self hidden.

The evils which can be seen give rise to other evils, and increase the rate of corruption of the society considerably. Such evils are considered very low and mean, and on account of this consciousness and feeling it is quite possible that the man who commits them may give them up sooner or later, and may turn a new leaf.

But that sinning which puts on the garb of worship has its evils hidden from the sight of the sinner himself and the society is also not able to recognize it.

It is so because such a criminal remains absorbed in the ramifications of his acts. He is under the impression that he is also working for the pleasure of Allah, then how can he realize that he has committed a sin? And how can he turn away from a thing which he considers righteous?

As regards the general society, it is harmed more by: the learned *(ulema)* hypocrites than by the poor and d needy people, who are the habitual criminals of this type.

Want of sincerity in the talented people makes their ability a curse for the country, and such a society suffers

a set back instead of making progress.

It is also true that to pollute a virtue with the impurities of the self is to downgrade its value. This is another crime which is committed for want of sincerity.

The man wants to please other men and is neglecting to seek the pleasure of his Lord; he does not understand, on account of his foolishness, as to what his sin signifies. He is turning away *from* the Being who is Most Powerful and who is Independent of everything, to those , beggars who have neither power, nor riches. That is why Allah's Messenger has said:

"When on the Day of Resurrection, about the occurrence of which there is no doubt, Allah will gather all the people who came first and last, a caller will give a call: 'Whoever has associated another with Allah in his acts should seek his reward from that partner because Allah is more free from partnership than all the partners."

{Tirmizi)

Soldiers should Prove their Sincerity of Action

Whether it may be a common soldier or a commander, the soldiers should keep their *jihad* free from all the impurities of worldly show and trappings, because they have attached their life and death with a sacred duty, compared to which ranks, medals, honors, salaries, etc., have no value They should give preference to whatever is with Allah, and should sacrifice their desires for pure devotion and sincere submission.

It is narrated by Abdullah bin A'mar bin A 'as that he said: -

"O Messenger of Allah! show me the difference s between *jihad* and battle." The Prophet replied: O ,. Abdullah bin A'mar I If you fight displaying patience and for seeking the pleasure of Allah, then He will lift you in the same state; and if you fight with pride on the largeness of your numbers and to show , to the people, then Allah will lift you in the same state. O Abdullah bin A'mar! In whatever condition you fight or you are killed, Allah will lift you in that condition."

(Abu Daud)

Employees should Work in the Cause or Allah

The writing work that the employees do in their offices, the accounts that they maintain, the intellectual energy that they spend. the manual work which they do with their hands, all these activities should be conducted by them in the interest of their country and for seeking the pleasure of Allah.

An animal labors for the whole day for its fodder. The efforts and labor of a common man has the value of an animal's labor, and all his work and labor are in proportion to his salary, and that is his purpose and center of activity.

But an intelligent and wise man knows the value of his ideas and his acts and employs them in the cause of some great objective. It is very regrettable that the general employees are suffering from this disease. They do not understand anything else but wealth, ranks and promotion. They consider their world and their religion also limited by this circle only, and they think that it is the axis of their happiness and sorrow, action and inaction, desire and ambition, and their lives revolve round that only.

Allah's Messenger has said:

"When the last period would come, there would be three sects in my Ummah. One sect will sincerely worship only Allah. The second sect will worship as hypocrites. The third sect will worship so that they may defraud others of their wealth.

When Allah would gather them on the Day of Judgment and say to the last sect: 'By My honor and grandeur, what did you expect to get from My worship ?' He would answer: 'By Your honor and grandeur, I was fraudulently taking others' property by that.' Allah would say that whatever he had collected was of no use to him and would command him to be sent to hell.

Then He would address the sect whose worship was governed by hypocrisy: 'By My honor and grandeur, tell Me what was your purpose ?'; He would say: 'By Your honor and grandeur, the purpose was to show to the people.' Allah would say: 'Nothing from it has reached me. Take him away to hell.'

Then the Almighty Allah would ask the sect that was sincerely worshipping Him: 'By My honor and grandeur, what did you expect to get from My worship?' He would answer: 'By Your honor and Your grandeur, You are better aware of the condition of the person who sought Your words and Your pleasure.' Allah would say:

'My slave has spoken the truth. Take him to Paradise'."

Teachers and Students should keep the Pleasure of Allah before Themselves

In the fields of learning and culture deep sincerity is extremely necessary. Knowledge is such a pure and high thing that on its basis Allah granted superiority to man over all the other creatures. Therefore it would be a very mean thing if it is utilized in furtherance of human motivations and if it is reinforced with mischief, corruption, and carnal desires. The world received a great setback at the hands of those learned men who did not possess good moral character, and were deprived of purity and loftiness.

Islam has made it compulsory for the teacher and the taught to give proof of sincerity in the matter of knowledge, and should give preference to high values and public interests over all other things. This activity of learning and teaching is however undertaken with the purpose of merely earning wealth. This limits its utility to individuals only. In this way this valuable treasure is wasted, as is seen in the case of lakhs of people. In fact, it amounts to depreciate the value of learning and to waste this great message.

Allah's Messenger has said:

" Anyone who has obtained a learning by which Allah's pleasure could be obtained, but his purpose was merely to achieve success in the world, then on the Day of Resurrection he will not be able to smell the fragrance of Paradise."

(Abu Daud)

Islam severely disapproves that a man should attain learning and when he gets proficiency in that line, he should start impressing others of his learning and his greatness, and open a battlefield of debates and controversial discussion.

It is mentioned in the *hadith:*

"Do not attain learning in order to express pride before the umma, nor by its help quarrel with the foolish people, nor through it try to overwhelm the meetings, but he who does so, his destination is fire."

(Ibn Maja)

These religious and worldly learning which are flying their banners over the world have reached this position when they were seekers of truth, and avoided mean purposes. But it does not mean that the *u/ema* and students must necessarily face trials and tribulations and have definitely to pass through hard times. No, its meaning is never this, for it is not an inevitable demand of the honest intention that the sincere people should be subjected to difficulties and be confronted with adversities.

The diseases that are generated for want of sincerity are many. When these diseases grow, they destroy faith; and when they are less in number then they bore holes in it and give a chance to Satan to enter through them.

The Almighty Allah is displeased with the slaves of wealth and position because it is determined for a Muslim that he would sacrifice all interests, relations and ambitions in the cause of Allah, and it is not for him that he should go after them and forget his Lord and His pleasure.

The magicians of Firaun (Pharaoh) established a perfect example of true belief and high sincerity, when they rejected all the threats of Firaun, and trampled below their feet the love of wealth and position, and replied to that tyrant king's challenge in these words:

"So decree whatever you desire to decree; for you can only decree (touching) the life of this world. For us, we have believed in our Lord; may He forgive us our faults, and the magic to which you did compel us; for Allah is Best and most Abiding."

(Taha : 72-73)

What a great difference between these two groups!

One group disdainfully kicks at the material world, and the other group, in order to reach up to some big personality or to achieve some small gains, makes fun of , its own religion and faith and sacrifices it for achieving success in the world.

CHAPTER 11

ETIQUETTE OF CONVERSATION

The Manners of Conversation

The tongue and the language are great gifts of Allah. These gifts that Allah has given him makes him superior to all other creatures:

"The Most Gracious Allah has taught the Quran; He has created man; He has taught him speech."

(Ar-Rahman.:.1-4)

The greater the gift, the higher would be its re-payment. Being grateful for it is as necessary as being ungrateful is reprehensible.

Islam has explained how people can derive benefit from this unparallel blessing, and how the speech that I flows from their tongues throughout the day be used for goodness and truth. People who are never tired of talking are not few in number.

If you examine their talks you will find that most of these consist of senseless, absurd and trash things, whereas Allah has not given men their tongues for this purpose, nor these capabilities were given for such a purpose:
"***In most of their secret talks there is no good; but if one exhorts to a deed of charity or justice or conciliation between men, (secrecy is permissible); to him who does this, seeking the good pleasure of Allah, We shall soon give a reward of the highest (value) .***"

(An-Nissa: 114)

Islam has given special attention to speech, its style, its etiquette and rules, because the talk that comes out from a man's mouth discloses his intellectual level and moral nature, because the etiquette of speech in a group reveals its general standard, and shows the standard of decency in their environment.

Take an Account of Yourself

Before addressing others take a glance at yourself, and ask yourself whether this is an occasion which demands speaking. If the answer is in the affirmative, then speak, otherwise silence is much better. To avoid talking unnecessarily on appropriate occasions is a worship of great rewards.

' Abdullah bin Masood says:

"By the Being other than whom there is no God, on this earth there is none more deserving of long imprisonment than the tongue."

(Tibrani)

Abdullah Ibn Abbas says: "Five things are more valuable than the ,horses with the black-striped legs:

1. Do not indulge in senseless talk, because it is useless and absurd, and I am uncomfortable from the fear of your committing a sin.

2. Talk purposefully when there is an occasion for it, for there are many people who talk without an occasion. This is a

3. Do not indulge in hot discussion with an intelligent man or with a fool. If he is intelligent, he will be angry with you and will hate you, and if he is a fool and uneducated, he will try to harm you.

4. In the absence of your brother speak of him in the same words in which you would like him to speak of you in your absence, and consider him innocent of the thing which you would like him to consider you innocent of.

5. Act like a man who thinks that he will be rewarded for a good deed and will be punished on committing a crime."

(lbn Abi-al-duniya)

A Muslim can develop these attributes in himself only when he keeps his tongue in control, and is able to keep silent wherever necessary. He should be able to hold the reins of his tongue in his hand; wherever necessary he should speak, and wherever it is not necessary he should keep quiet.

Those who are ruled by their tongue, they are pushed back, and in the fields of life they receive insults and disrepute.

Safety lies in Silence

One loses sense in talking absurdities and aimlessly.

Those who want to impress others in meetings by their talk, they speak so glibly and endlessly that the words come out from their mouth like rainwater. Although they try to convince others that they are very wise, intelligent and farsighted, but sometimes the impression created by their long-winding speeches is quite the contrary, and from their talks people feel that there is no relation between what they want the people to believe about them and what actually they are.

When a man wants to contemplate over his position and wants to organize his religious thoughts, he runs away from the atmosphere of noise and uproar and takes shelter in a quiet place. And therefore if Islam recommends silence and considers it a means of civilized training, then it is not at all surprising.

The Prophet had, among other things, advised Hazrat Abu Zar in this way:

“Adopt silence. This is a way of causing Satan to run away, it is a support to you in the matter of your religion."

(Ahmed)

Undoubtedly the tongue is a rope in the hands of Satan. He turns it anywhere he likes. When a man is unable to control his affairs, his mouth becomes a passage for all the negative talk which contaminates the heart and covers it with the sheet of negligence.

The prophet has said: The faith of a man cannot be straight unless his heart is straight, and his heart cannot be straight unless his tongue becomes straight."

(Ahmed)

The first stage of this straightness and correctness is that man should wash his hands off all the irrelevant matters and he should not interfere in those things about which he is not answerable.

"It is the excellence of a man's faith that he gives up meaningless work,"

(Tirmizi)

Avoidance of Nonsense is a Condition of Success

To avoid irrelevant and nonsensical things is a condition for success and is a proof of perfection. Quran has mentioned it in between two essential duties *(Faraiz)* of Muslims, which gives an idea of its importance :

"Successful indeed are the believers who are humble in their prayers, and who shun vain conversation, and who are payers of zakat."

(AI-Muminoon .. 1-4)

If all the men of the world count their efforts which they make in indulging in vain conversation and acts, they will come to realize that a very large part of the long winding tales and stories, widely circulated news, narratives, speeches and broadcasts comprises of vain, meaningless and useless things, which are eagerly watch ed, and heard, but no benefit is derived from them,

Islam has expressed its disapproval of the meaningless talks and things, because the superficial and useless things have no value in its eyes, It dislikes that man should not busy himself in matters for which he has been created and instead he should waste his life in involving himself in other irrelevant matters.

The more distant a Muslim will be from an absurd and irrelevant thing, the more high will be his rank before Allah

Anas bin Malik says that when a man died another man passed a remark about him in the presence of the Prophet that he would go to Paradise. The Prophet stopped him and said:

"Do not you know ? It is likely that he might I have indulged in meaningless conversation or might have been miserly in spending his wealth, although this does not effect any reduction."

(Tirmizi)

A vain talker, on account of the weak co-ordination between his thought and his tongue, blurts out whatever comes on his tongue. Sometimes he says something which places him in danger, and he ruins his future. It is said that the more one talks, the more one commits mistakes. An Arabic poet has said:

"The youth dies by the fault of his tongue whereas from the faltering of the feet death does not occur."

In the tradition it is stated: "A man says something so that those present may laugh, although on account of it he is thrown to the most distant region between the earth and the sky. The faltering of the feet cause much less harm than the faltering of the tongue."

(Baihaqui)

Heart-Warming Speech is a Missionary's Wherewithal

When a man has to speak, he should say something good and worthwhile. He should accustom his tongue to indulge in good, decent and respectable conversation, because the best manifestation of the thoughts and feelings of tile heart and mind is the classical literature, with which Allah has blessed the followers of all the religions.

Quran has clearly mentioned that the covenant which Hazrat Moosa had taken from Bani Israil also included the condition that they should indulge in good and worthwhile conversation:

"*And (recall) when We took a covenant from the Children of Israil, (saying).. .. Worship none save Allah, be good to parents and kindred and orphans and those in need.. and speak aright and kindly to people, and establish salat and pay Zakat."*

***“ Baqarah* .. 82)**

Clean and decent conversation impresses both friends and foes, and its sweet fruits can be readily enjoyed. It guards love between friends. It strengthens their friendship and makes it durable and defeats all the tricks of the devil for weakening their relations and for sowing the seeds of discord between them:

"Say (0 Prophet!) to my slaves to speak which* is *kindlier. Verily, the devil sows discord among them. Verily, the devil is for man an open enemy."

***“ Bani Israil..* 53”**

The devil is hiding in ambush against man. He tries to sow the seeds of discord, enmity and jealousy among them. He wants that the ordinary disputes be converted into big bloody battles, and that no spanner should be thrown in his works by means of good, decent and kindly talk.

If you would talk gracefully with your enemies, their enmity would disappear, and their tempers will be cooled, or at least a distinct difference can be witnessed in their hostile attitude.

"The good deed and the evil deed are not alike. Repel the evil deed with one which* is *better, then surely, he, between whom and you there was enmity(will become) as though he was a bosom friend."

***(Ha-Meem-Sajda:* 34)**

To make Muslims in all conditions well-behaved and of good manners, the Prophet has said: "You will not be able to rule over the people through your wealth, but through good appearance and good manners you can win their hearts." - (AI-Bazzar). In the eyes of Islam not to give a gift to somebody while behaving in a decent way and with good manners is better than giving it in an indecent manner, and by giving him pain.

"A kind word with forgiveness is better than charity followed by injury. Allah is Free of All Wants and Most Forbearing."

***(Baqarah:* 263)**

Decent conversation is such a habit that it is counted among the virtues and good attributes, and one who adopts this habit becomes worthy of pleasing Allah and for him is writ eternal bliss,

Anas narrates that one man asked the Prophet teach him such act as would enable him to enter the Paradise.

The Prophet replied:

"Feed the poor, practice salutation *(salaam)* in the night when people are enjoying sleep, offer prayers, you will enter Paradise with peace."

(AI-Bazzar)

Allah has commanded us to adopt decent and serious manners of speaking when we may discuss matters with the followers of other religions. It should not have intensity nor heat and anger. However those who are , aggressive against

“ ***And argue not with the People of the Book unless it be in r away) that is better, save with such of them as do wrong."***

***“Ankabut..* 46)**

Great men always take care in all conditions that no extra and useless word comes out of their mouth, and they do not adopt an attitude of pride and foolishness with every specie of creatures.

Malik has reported that Yahya bin Saeed has told him that Hazrat Issa (Christ) one day passed by a pig, and he addressed it: "Pass on peacefully." He was asked: "You talk to a pig in this manner !" He replied: "I am afraid my tongue may not be habituated to rude talk."

The Answer to the Uneducated is Silence

Some people remain ill-mannered. hot-tempered and lewd-talkers for the whole of their lives. Their faith and belief are not at all disturbed by these evils, nor does their morality admonish them on their attitude. They have no hesitation in telling others things which are disagreeable to them. Whenever they find a suitable field to let off their steam, their tongues run away with vulgar and obscene talks like rein less steeds. No cries stop them nor does any voice inhibit them.

The attitude of a gentleman with such people should, be that he should not engage himself in any discussion with them, because any provocation would lead to great disturbance, and it is necessary to seal this source or trouble. For this reason Islam has commanded to ignore the foolish and unwise people.

Once one of these illiterate persons stood at the door of the Prophet's house with a view to entering it. The kind Prophet treated him very decently and managed to persuade him to go away. There was no other go besides this, for tolerance and forbearance is the cloth by which the uneducated and the fool can be gagged. Had the Prophet allowed him to do whatever he intended to do, then he would have had to hear all the drivel and the rubbish talk from which his ears thus remained safe.

Hazrat Ayesha says that one man sought the Prophet's permission to enter the house, and the Prophet remarked: "What a bad man is he of his family !" When he came in, the Prophet talked to him pleasantly and softly. After he went away, she asked him 'O Messenger of Allah! You heard this man talking in this way, yet there was no sign of perturbation on your face, on the contrary you talked to him pleasantly ?” The Prophet replied: "O Ayesha ! when did you hear me talking vulgarly? On the Day of Judgment before Allah the worst man would be the one for avoiding whose vulgar talk people stopped meeting him,"

(Bukhari)

This policy is such that its truth is borne out by our daily experiences, for how can a man like that could tarnish his good manners by hobnobbing with a bad mannered person? If he starts teaching manners to every uneducated and foolish person, then his life will become a bundle of troubles, For this reason, the holy Quran, while listing the qualities of Allah's slaves, has first mentioned *this* tolerance of theirs:

"And the slaves of (Allah) Most Gracious are those who walk on the earth in humility, and when the ignorant address them, they say.. 'Salam." {Peace)",

***(AI-Furqan..* 63)**

Man swallows his anger once, twice, but later on he bursts.

But a well-behaved Muslim is expected by Islam to tolerate more troubles and adversities, so that consequently the evil

Sa'eed bin Musayyeb says: **"When the Prophet was sitting with his companions one person used insulting words against Hazrat Abu Bakr, causing him pain, but Abu Bakr was silent, For the second time also he used the bitter words against him, and still Abu Bakr was silent. When for the third time he hurt him with his tongue, Abu Bakr tried to answer him, The Messenger of Allah got up. Abu Bakr asked him: 'Are you displeased with me, O Messenger of Allah ?' The Prophet replied: 'No, but from the heaven an angel had come down and he was denying that man's talk, and when you started to answer that man, the angel went away and the devil sat down. And I cannot sit where the devil is sitting"**

(Abu Daud)

To pay respect to the foolish and unintelligent people does not mean that their low and superficial acts should also be accepted. In these two conditions there is a very great difference.

The first thing means that man should have control over his self in the presence of folly and unintelligence, and he should not give them a chance to show their true I nature which is the bearer of anger and wrath, and be provoked to take revenge.

While the second aspect has quite the contrary sense.

In that condition it amounts to allow the self to submit to folly, meanness and disrepute, and to accept those low things which no wise and decent man would be ready to accept.

The holy Quran has treated the subject of respect to ! the unintelligent people and the hatred of their low and mean acts in this manner :

“ Allah does not like that evil should be noised t abroad in public speech, except where injustice ha; been done; for Allah is He Who hears and knows all things. Whether you express a good deed or conceal it or cover evil with pardon, verily Allah does blot out (sins) and has power (in the judgment of values)"

(An-Nissa.. 148-149)

Avoid Polemic

The commands that Islam issued to keep the tongue safe from baseless and absurd things is to declare polemical discussion and controversial debating and to shut its doors upon Muslims, irrespective of whether the polemical debating is correct or otherwise.

It is so because here such conditions arise that a man tries to score a point and to overcome his opponent. As he wants to defeat his adversary by his talk, he takes the support of even dubious and unreliable things which can strengthen his argument, and he quotes such statements unhesitatingly which help him in his task. In such a gathering people give more Importance to winning than on expressing truth. This is likely to result in rancor and disturbances, in which clarification and satisfaction have no place.

Islam hates all these conditions and considers them a danger for the religion and morality.

The Prophet has said:

"He who has given up controversial discussion in senseless and false matters, for him there will be built a house in the lower section of the Paradise; and he who has corrected his morals, for him there will be built a house in the upper section of the Paradise."

(Abu Daud)

There are some people whom Allah has gifted the power of tongue and has made them expert in that line. This prompts them to exercise their expertise over all people, educated or uneducated. It becomes a burning desire in their hearts, and they do not rest content with out satisfying this desire.

When this group makes others a victim of their power of speech and shows their expertise, they hurt their feelings, and when this quality is required to be employed in expressing the religious realities then all the beauty and grandeur of their speech vanishes.

Islam is extremely displeased with non-sense talkers who shout at the top of their voices, and admonish them very severely.

The Prophet has said: **"Before Allah the most hated are the quarrelsome debaters."**

(Bukhari)

In another tradition it is stated:

"After receiving guidance no community went astray and did not deviate from the path it was following, except when debaters turned them away from it."

(Tirmizi)

On account of the speed of its tongue, this group does not stay within the limits. It goes on talking, feels conceited and struts along. For this group the position of words is of first importance, their meaning takes the second place. As regards the great and clean purpose, many times it is demoted to the last place, \and sometimes in this hullabaloo it does not get any place at all.

It is narrated that once a deceitful man, wearing beautiful clothes, went in the presence of the Prophet and during conversation raised his voice higher than the voice of the Prophet. When he went away, the Prophet said:

"Allah does not like people of this type. They work their tongue in the way a cow does when it chews the cud. In the same way Allah will twist their faces and mouths on the Doomsday in the fire of hell."

(Tibrani)

When in the fields of religion, politics and other branches of learning the so called orators and expert writers come forward for indulging in polemics and debates, then the spirit of religion receives a setback. The face of politics, learning and sciences is disfigured. And possibly this helped in hastening the decline of our civilization and culture, in the formation of group of the schools of “Fiqh”, division of the Ummah on the sectarian basis and other diseases of disruption. In other matters of religion and worldly affairs also this controversial debating spread its poison.

Controversial debating is worlds away from pure, clean discussion, and sober and pleasant argumentation.

A number of companions of the Prophet have reported that once they were discussing and debating some religious point, when the Prophet arrived; he was terribly angry. He was never seen so angry before. He admonished them and said:

"Stay put, O Ummah of Muhammed! Nations before you were destroyed by this only. Give up this debating. The portion of good is very little in it. Give up this discussion and argumentation, for this is not a quality of a Momin. Avoid this polemic and disputation, for the loss sustained by one who indulges in it becomes complete. For your being a sinner it is sufficient that you are a debater. Give up this debating, because on the Day of Resurrection there will be none to intercede for the debater. Wash off your hands of this wicked habit, for in Paradise I will lead only to three kinds of houses, its lower floor, middle floor and the upper floor, which will be

for that man who has given up debating truthfully and with good intention. Keep away from this bad habit because after idolatry, the first thing that my Lord has forbidden is this very debating."

(Tibrani)

Such gatherings of men are arranged where novel and attractive talks drive men towards them. Islam dislikes such gatherings, where people sit and waste their time, and where people always lap up news and defects of others. They have wealth in excess under whose shadow they try to have good time. They have no other work beside this that they seek pleasure in the affairs of other people.

"Woe to every (kind of) scandal-monger and backbiter, who piles up wealth and lays it by, thinking that his wealth would make him last for ever! By no means I He will be sure to be thrown into that which breaks to pieces."

(Humaza: 1-4)

In modern times such gathering in clubs are the order of the day.

This is a calamity that has caused the society to be infected with a number of diseases. This calamity is found in abundance in big towns and small cities, even though there is no religious necessity for this thing.

It is mentioned in the *hadith* :

"Avoid sitting on the roads." The people said: "O Messenger of Allah! What would happen to our those gatherings without which there would be no life for us." He said: "If you insist on having gathering, then do due justice to them." People asked: "What is their due, O Messenger of Allah." He answered: "To keep your eyes down, to remove harmful things, to give answer to salutation, to command performance of good things and to prevent commitment of evil things."

(Muslim)

CHAPTER 12

KEEP YOUR BOSOM FREE FROM RANCOUR AND ENMITY

Recognition of Greatness

What would be a better way of giving comfort to hearts, of removing sorrow and of providing coolness to the eyes than that man should live the life with a healthy and peaceful heart. His bosom should be free from the disturbances of rancour, jealousy and ill feelings for others. He should be glad to see others enjoying the comforts of life, and should consider it as a favor of Allah and think that all slaves are dependent on Him. He should remember the saying of the Messenger of Allah:

"O Allah ! The gifts that you have bestowed on me or on any other creatures, it is only on account of your favour, in which none is associated with You. All praises and all thanks are for You."

(Abu Daud)

And when a man should find some other person in difficulty, and sorrowful, he should sympathies with him, and pray to Allah to remove his difficulties and to pardon his sins, and he should remember that prayer which the Prophet had made to God:

"O Allah! If you are the Forgiver, then forgive the sins of all creatures. And no slave of Yours should be in difficulty."

A Muslim should live in such a way that he should be a sympathizer of the people and a sharer of the woes of humanity. He should be content and thankful for his life and should be happy with whatever Allah has given him. His self should be free from the feelings of jealousy and rancour. The corruption of heart from rancour and jealousy is a fatal disease, from such a heart faith disappears immediately, like the liquid that flows down from the hole in its container.

Islam pays special attention to heart, for a black heart tarnishes righteous acts, it disfigures its attractiveness, and it stains and mars its brightness.

And if the heart is glowing, then Allah bestows prosperity even on a small act of righteousness, and towards it every good rushes speedily and makes its place in it (heart).

Abdullah bin A'mar narrates:

"The Messenger of Allah was asked as to what people were great (in virtue). The Prophet replied: 'One whose heart is neat and clean, and whose tongue is truthful.' He was told: 'We are aware of the truthful tongue but what is the meaning of neat and clean heart.'

He replied: 'One that fears God, is free from evils, there is no sin in it, neither insubordination, jealousy nor rancour'."

(Ibn Majah)

Therefore, in reality the Muslim society truly is that which is based on mutual love, friendship, brotherhood, the feeling for mutual cooperation and straight dealings. There is no room for an ungrateful person in that society, no place for a person nursing jealousy and rancour in his bosom; on the contrary his condition should be like this:

“And those who came after them say:. 'Our Lord I Forgive us, and our brethren who came before us into the Faith ,and leave not in our hearts rancour (or some injury), against those who have believed Our Lord I You are indeed full of Kindness, Most Merciful'."

(Hashr.. 10)

Keep away from Mutual Enmity

When the quarrel intensifies and its roots go deeper, and its thorns become branches and branches increase in number, then the freshness of the fruits of faith is adversely affected. Softness, sympathy, satisfaction and peace which are encouraged by the Islamic teachings receive a setback. Performance of worship loses its righteousness, nor does the self get any benefit from it.

Many times the mutual quarrels perturb the persons who claim to be wise. In this they take a recourse to the lowly and superficial things, and sometimes indulge in such dangerous acts which only increase difficulties and bring troubles. When a man is displeased, his eyes become prejudiced and ignore the camel and object to gnat. Such eyes do not appreciate the beauty of the peacock, for they only see its ugly feet and claws. If a slight defect is present, it turns the molehill into a mountain.

And sometimes the internal rancour and jealousy affect them so badly that no hesitation is felt in inventing imaginary stories. Islam disapproves of all these manifestations of ill-feeling and advises to abstain from them. It declares their avoidance as the most virtuous form or worship.

The Prophet has said:

"Listen, may I not tell you something more important than salat, fasting and charity.” The people requested him to do so. He said: "To keep the mutual relationship on the right footing, because the defect in the mutual relationship is a thing which shaves a thing clean, I do not mean that it shaves the hair, but that it shaves (removes) the religion."

(Tirmizi)

Many times Satan is not able to persuade wise men to worship idols, but since he is very keen on misguiding and ruining men, he manages to succeed in driving them away from God, so much so that these wise men become more indifferent in respecting the rights of God than the idolaters themselves. The best method adopted by the devil for this purpose is to sow the seeds of enmity in the hearts of the people. When this enmity develops into a fire and open hostilities result, he enjoys the scene. This fire burns man's present and future into ashes and totally destroys their relationship and virtues.

The Messenger of Allah has said:

"The Satan has been disappointed that he would not be worshipped in the Island of Arabia, but he has not been disappointed from kindling the fire of fighting among the people."

(Muslim)

It means that when wickedness takes roots in the hearts, and people start hating love and brotherhood and when these are destroyed, people revert *to* cruelty and enmity, and break all those relations and connections for joining which Allah has given command; and thus they spread corruption on this earth.

Do Dot Sever Relations

Islam is fully alert in respect of the destructive causes of aggression and excesses, and tries to remedy them before they may go beyond the limit. It is common knowledge that men differ from one another in their nature and temperament. If their mutual contact does not result in clashes and estrangement, then inevitably there will appear narrowness and perturbation. For this reason Islam has formulated such principles as may keep the Muslims away from disruption and

mischief, and as may generate in their hearts the feelings of love and friendship. For this purpose Islam has forbidden its followers from severing relations and mutual enmity.
In human life it so happens if the slightest excess is experienced from some other persons, then it gives us pain, and immediately we sever our relations.
But Allah does not like that the mutual relationship among Muslims should be subjected to such adverse consequences. Allah's Messenger has said:
"Do not sever relation. Do not indulge in mutual enmity. Do not entertain rancour and jealousy against one another, and do not be jealous of others. Be brethren among yourselves and become Allah's slaves It is not permissible for a man to have severed his relations with any of his brethren for more than three days."

(Bukhari)

In another tradition it is mentioned:
"It is not permissible for a Momin to have no connection with another Momin for more than three days. After three days have elapsed and he happens to meet him, he should salute him. If he answers the salute, then both will share the rewards (Ajr), and if the other person does not answer the salute, the sin will be on him, and the Muslim will be innocent of the sin of severing relations."

(Abu Daud)

In this hadith the period of three days is kept so that during this period the intensity of anger will be reduced and his wrath will be cooled. After this it will be the responsibility of every Muslim to restore his relationship with his brethren and to revert to his old routine, as if the severing of relation was a cloud that had gathered due to some causes, till the wind blew and drew away the cloud and cleared the atmosphere.

In every dispute or quarrel, a man is necessarily in one or the other condition, he is either an oppressor or the oppressed. If he is an oppressor, he has usurped the rights of others, and then he should give up this wrong policy and should reform his character. He should understand that his opponent could abandon his hostility and rancour towards him only when he takes a satisfying and pleasant step in this regard. In such a condition Islam has commanded that he should request his opponent to come to a peaceful settlement and he should please him.

The Prophet has said:

"He who has harmed his brother's rights or has hurt his honor, then he should please him today, before the day comes when there will be neither *dirham* nor *dinar* with him. If he would have virtues, then they would be taken in proportion to the aggression that he had committed. If there would be no virtues in his record, then the evil deeds of the oppressed would be thrust into his (oppressor's) account."

(Bukhari)

This is Islam's advice for the oppressors, but those who are the oppressed and whose rights have been harmed for them the advice of Islam is that when the oppressor may ask for their pardon and may seek his Lord's forgiveness, then he should pardon him and should show softness. In such circumstances, to reject the re- quest for pardon is a great sin.

It is mentioned in the tradition:

“A Muslim brother apologizes to another Muslim, and the latter does not accept his apology, then on him will be the same sin as is on the person who collects a tax which is not due'

(Ibn Maja)

"If a person pleads his innocence to the other, and the other one rejects it, then he will not be brought to the water tank."

(Tibrani)

By this clear guidance for the two opposing parties, Islam fights rancour and hatred, and destroys its germs at the

Islam considers it a meanness of the human nature and lowliness that the hatred should take roots in the; hearts and may not come out, but continue to burn in. side like a volcano.

Those who nurse rancour and hatred against others in their hearts are always in search of opportunities to vent their inner hatred. They feel satisfied only when they shout in anger at the top of their voices and indulge in abuses. They hurt the feelings of others and spread corrupt and mischief on the earth.

It is narrated by Ibn Abbas:

"Allah's Messenger has said: May I not show you the sign of the wicked people ?"

The people said: "If you are pleased, you may tell us."

He said: "The most wicked person among you is he who keeps himself aloof, is harsh on his slave, and does not give any gifts to others. May I not tell you of another person more wicked than this ?"

The people said: Definitely, O Messenger of Allah ! If you are pleased."

He said: "He who has rancour against the people and the people have rancor against him." Then he asked: "May I not tell you of a more wicked person than this ?"

The people said: 'Definitely, O Messenger of Allah ! If you are pleased."

He said: "He who does not pardon the errors of others, does not accept their apologies, and_does not forgive their crime." Again he asked: "May I not tell you of a more wicked person than this ?"

The people said: "Definitely, O Messenger of Allah! If you are pleased."

He said: "He from whom no good may be expected, and from whose wickedness there may not be security."

(Tibrani)

The wicked tendencies covered by this hadith are the different stages of rancour and hatred, which occur in proportion to the defect and disease. This is not a strange thing, because from the olden times the people knew about them. Even in the pre-Islam days (Jahiliyah) rancour was considered to be the lowest stage of the wicked conduct, and decent people always avoided it.

A poet of that period, Antara says:

"People of high position do not have rancour in their heart,

One who has anger in his nature cannot reach high position,"

Rancour and Jealousy Source of Evils

There are many evils in the society about which Islam has warned. If we think seriously, it will not be difficult to find out their source.

In spite of all these evils having different shapes and forms, they revolve round only one basic disease, and that is rancour and enmity,

False accusation of innocent people is a crime, the real cause of which is ill-feeling and hatred. Since it is extremely effective in mutilating the realities and to condemn the innocent persons, Islam has declared it to be the worst kind of falsehood. Hazrat Ayesha narrates that Allah's Messenger asked his companions:

"Do you know what is the worst aggression ?"

They said: ,. Allah and His Messenger know it better."

He said: "Before Allah the worst aggression is to make *halal* (permissible) for oneself the honour of another Muslim." Then he recited the following verse of the Quran :

"Those who have caused pain to the Momin men and Momin women without any fault of theirs, surely they have earned the (consequences of) false accusation and open sin."

(AI-Ahzab)

Undoubtedly the tendency to unnecessarily search out defects in other people and to foist it on them is the proof of meanness and wickedness. For being guilty of falsely accusing any person, Islam has decreed punishment in this world also, and it is difficult to imagine the punishment that the perpetrator of this sin will receive in the next world.

Allah's Messenger has said:

"He who, in order to find fault, says something about a person which was not there, Allah will throw such a man in hell till he tastes fully what he had fabricated."

(Tibrani)

In another tradition it is mentioned: "If a man spreads a rumor about another person of which he was innocent in order to bring him into disrepute, then it is Allah's task to melt him in fire on the Doomsday till he gets the full taste."

Abstain from Backbiting

The meaning of the cleanness and purity of the bosom is this that if a man does not work for the good of others, then at least he should wish well of others. But if a man who does not see any defects in others, and yet he accuses them of those defects and tries to entangle them in baseless charges, such a man is a liar, a deceiver and shameless. Allah has said:

"Those who want that obscenity may spread in the group of those who believe, for them there is very severe punishment in this world and in the next world. Allah knows and you do not know."

***(Noor:* 19)**

This is a great favor of Allah on His slaves that He approves of covering the defects of the creatures, even if those defects are present. And it is not permissible for a Muslim that he should feel pleased by condemning another Muslim, even if his condemnation may be correct, because men of healthy mentality feel pain when they see others in pain, and they wish for their recovery and welfare. As regards having pleasure from the disgrace suffered by others, from relating others' defects, and from uncovering their evils, this cannot be the course of action of a true Muslim.

Because of this Islam has declared backbiting as horam (forbidden), for in this the latent rancour gets a chance to come out and man is deprived of grace and blessing.

Abu Huraira has narrated that Allah's Messenger has said:

"Do you know what is backbiting ?"

The people said: "Allah and His Messenger know better."

He said: "You remember your brother in a way that may be disliked by him."

He was asked: "If my brother has the defect which I am relating, then is that also backbiting ?"

He replied: "If that defect is in him, then it is backbiting; and if the defect stated by you is not in him, then it is a false accusation."

(Muslim)

The etiquette and principles formulated by Islam for the security of friendships and for a safeguard against divisive tendencies includes the forbidding of telling tale (backbiting), because it creates ill-feeling among friends, and it destroys the cleanness of the hearts.

The Prophet used to restrain his companions from saying things which could hurt the feelings of others. He has said: **"None of you should convey to me any hurtful thing about my companions, for I want that as long as I may come to you my bosom should be clean in respect of everyone of you."**

(Abu Daud)

If some one hears a wrong thing about some other person, then he should not widen the hole of the torn cloth by putting his finger in it. Many evil gossips die their own death, if they are left to themselves, and many statements give rise to wars, because large numbers copy them and encourage them. They are like sparks which fly carrying destruction with them.

Allah's Messenger has said:

"No tell-tale can enter Paradise."

(Bukhari)

In another tradition, the word "Qattat" has been used. Ulema say that 'Qattat' and 'Nammam' have the same meaning. But there is also a contention that Nammam is one who hears some people talking and then goes on quoting them, and Qattat is one who eavesdrop other people talking and then goes on quoting them here and there.

In the *hadith* it is stated:

"Telling tales and rancour will go to hell. These two things cannot gather in the heart of a Muslim."

(Tibrani)

The essential outcome of enmity and rancour is that man should be under a wrong impression, should be in search of defects of his adversary, should grieve internally on seeing others in good position and well-placed.Islam has severely disapproved of all these things.

The Prophet says:

"Anyone who knows about the defect of his another Muslim brother and he has concealed it, then Allah will cover (his defects) on the Day of Judgment."

In another tradition, it is said:

"He who has veiled the defect of a Momin, he has acted as if he, has revived a girl placed in a grave."

(Tibrani)

The majority of persons who are always in search of the defects of others commit more abominable crimes than those committed by the professional criminals. The hearts of such people are miles away from their Lord.

To be in search of a crime in order to give it publicity is more reprehensible than actually committing that crime. What a great difference is there between these two feelings and attitudes? One feeling is that there is consideration against the things forbidden by Allah and concern for safeguarding it, while on the other side there is rancour against Allah's slaves and wish and desire to disgrace them.

The first feeling may even reach the limit, but it is not so bad as the second feeling, which secures pleasure and satisfaction from the ruin of the fellow-creatures- it waits for their faltering, and laughs in their adversities.

Keep away from Rancour

The safety of a Muslim's bosom and its purity is such a good gift that does not allow to attach his life to his fate or fortune or his sensibilities to the people, because many times he fails to achieve something, when others succeed. Sometimes he remains among the 'also ran' in the race of life, and others go ahead.

But this would be a very mean and uncivilized thing if a man is overcome by the feeling of selfishness and wishes others to sustain loss and setbacks only because he himself has not been able to forge ahead and derive benefits.

Then a Muslim must be broad-minded, a benefactor of humanity and a sympathizer of the people. He should look at all things from the viewpoint of public good. He should not keep his own selfish gain in view.

Generally people entertain the feelings of rancour and enmity because they see that their wishes and desires are not being satisfied, while others arc having more than their share of the spoils. This is the trouble which

does not allow them to rest awhile.

In the ancient times, the Devil had seen that the rank and position which he himself wanted had gone to the share of Adam; therefore, he decided that he would not allow Adam to enjoy these blessings:

"Because You have thrown me out of the way, I will lie in wait for them on the straight way;(17) then will I assault them from before them and behind them, from their right and their left, nor will you find in most of them gratitude (for your mercies)."

(A'raf: 16-17)

This Satanic tendency develops in the nature of the spiteful people and destroys their hearts. Islam has severely warned people to keep away from this forbidden tendency, and to give place to tranquility and satisfaction in life.

Anas bin Malik narrates that we were sitting with the Prophet when he said:

"Just now a man of Paradise is coming to you." Immediately a man from Ansar came there. His beard looked disheveled from the water of ablutions (Wuzu), and he was carrying in his left hand his shoes. On the second day also the Prophet repeated the same words, and the same man again appeared before them, in the same condition. On the third also the Prophet repeated the same thing and the man of Ansar again appeared in the same condition. When the Prophet stood up, Abdullah bin A'mar went after that man, and said to him: "I have had a quarrel with my father, and I have sworn not to go to my house for three days. If you give me shelter, it would be most desirable." He said: "It is all right,"

Anas says that Abdullah bin A'mar says that he spent three nights in the company of that man, but he did not find him praying in the night, but whenever he went to bed, he used to remember Allah till he used to get up for the prayer of the morning. But Abdullah bin A'mar says that he did not hear anything from his mouth except words of goodness. Abdullah says:

"When three nights passed and in my eyes his conduct did not hold any importance, I told that man: 'O slave of God! I have neither quarreled with my father, nor have I severed relation with him. The fact is that I have heard the Prophet of Allah saying that a man of Paradise is coming before us, three times, and you appeared before us. Then I desired to stay with you and to see what act of yours is that - so that I may follow the same, but I did not see you doing any extraordinary work, What is the reason that the Messenger of Allah has said such a nice thing about you?

He replied: "The reality is what you have seen." When I was returning he called me and said: "The reality is the same that has been witnessed by you; however, I do not keep any spite against any of my Muslim brethren, and if Allah has blessed someone with any good thing, I am not jealous of him. Abdullah bin A'mar said: "This quality of yours must have reached the Prophet of Allah."

(Ahmed)

In another narration the words of the *hadith* are as follows:

"The thing that you have seen is correct. O my nephew ! I do not pass a night keeping spite against a Muslim."

(Bazzar)

Do not go near Jealousy

Islam has declared jealousy as *haram* (forbidden). Allah has commanded his Messenger to seek shelter from the mischief of jealous people, because jealousy is a spark that burns inside the bosom and hurts the jealous person as well as others.

The man who wishes that the good things of life should be destroyed; he becomes a source of trouble for the society. His conscience is not satisfied with anything, Allah's Messenger has said:

"in the stomach of a man, the dust flying in the path of Allah and the flames of hell cannot be together, nor can the faith and jealousy dwell together in the stomach of a man,"

(Baihaqui)

In another tradition it is mentioned:

"Keep away from jealousy, for jealousy eats up virtues in the same way as fire eats up wood."

(Abu Daud)

The person who hates the rewarded person or the one deserving Allah's favors and wishes that they should have been deprived of those things, for such a man there are a number of causes which repel him from the realities of life.

The first cause is that he is imprisoned by the world and the lure of the wealth of the world. He fights for it, and he sheds tears for not achieving his material goal, and he entertains feeling of jealousy against those who are successful in this world. He is angry with them.

This is a great misunderstanding about comprehending both the worlds; and the fact is that he has completely ignored the next world and has closed his eyes from the necessity of making preparations for that world.

This negligence on his part has resulted in his reaching this condition. It is necessary that every man should prepare for the next world, and should be sorry for losing opportunities to do so.

"0 mankind! there has come to you a direction from your Lord and a healing for the (diseases) in your hearts, and for those who believe, a guidance and a mercy. Say: 'In the bounty of Allah, and In His mercy,-in that let them rejoice,.' that is better than the (wealth) they hoard."

{Yunus.. 57-58}

The man who is jealous is weak of determination, helpless, forgetful of his Lord, and unaware of his Lord's principles operative in this world. For this reason, when he fails to achieve something, he conspires and schemes against the successful people. As an. Arabic poet says:

"People became jealous of the young man because they could not reach up to his successes. So every one appears to be his enemy and opponent."

The proper thing for him was to turn to his Lord,

to seek His favors because his treasures are not limited to or reserved for any single person. After this he should again strive for his objective. It is quite likely that what he could not achieve in his first attempt could be available in the second. Undoubtedly this is much more desirable than nursing spite and rancour in his bosom.

There is a very big difference between jealousy and high ambition, in jealousy and desire and envy, in jealousy and not desiring any deviation in straight dealing, and in charity and in expressing displeasure against contamination. It is obvious that these two things cannot be placed together.

Ambition is the name of the desire for reaching the high pinnacle and of achieving it, and this is the quality of Allah's faithful slaves. Hazrat Sulaiman prayed to his Lord thus:

"My Lord ! Forgive me and bestow on me sovereignty such as shall not belong to any after me. Surely, You are the Bestower."

(Sad: **36)**

A quality of the slaves of the Most Gracious that has been mentioned is that they pray to their Lord thus:

"Our Lord ! Vouchsafe us comfort of our wives and of our offspring, and make us patterns (leaders) of the righteous."

(Furquan: **74)**

internally over another person's. achieving His blessings is an abominable tendency. There is a great difference between these two.

Envy is the name of the desire to have those gifts which Allah has bestowed on others. But since nursing such a desire and envy can also open the gateways of mischief, can encourage the inclination towards wrong desires, and can also incite for achieving that which is apparently beneficial but in the ultimate analysis harmful. Islam has, therefore, fixed the norms for the things for which a man can have desire and for which competition is permissible. Allah's Messenger has said: "Excepting two things, in no other thing jealousy is permissible:

One-it is permissible to be jealous of the man who has been given wealth by Allah and who is spending it in the cause of truth unhesitatingly,

and second, that man whom Allah has blessed with wisdom, in whose light he a1 takes decisions and imparts education in it to others."

The sense in which the word jealousy has been used in the *hadith* does not include the desire for bringing to in an end the blessing or the favour, but it means the efforts to achieve that blessing and having envy for that blessing has been termed as jealousy.

The idea is that the thing which a man should make his objective should be great and magnificent. It is lack of ambition or courage that a man should desire for small things, and should entertain expectations from them. There are many things which do not yield anything but distress and sorrow, and the spite against other people is generated because they think in an unhealthy hat manner as to way other people have achieved those things from which they are deprived.

About such things Allah says:

"In no wise covet those things* in *which Allah has bestowed His gifts more freely on some of you than on others, to men* is *allotted what they earn. And to women what they earn; but ask Allah of His bounty; for Allah has full knowledge of all things."

(Nissa.. **32)**

As regards disliking the untaught dealing in general conditions and matters, this is the rightful demand of justice and assertion. It has nothing to do with despicable jealousy.

If we feel angry that some person has earned a lot of benefits from a little labor, or has obtained a high ranking position, then such an anger is understandable and praiseworthy. This is a kind of public welfare which has nothing to do with jealousy.

Islam has been hearing and watching individuals at intervals, so that it may clean them of the impurities of spite and enmity, and may nourish in the hearts of the general people clean and pure feelings for their good, and for itself also. Every day, every week and every year arrangements are made for the cleaning of the individuals, so that their dirt and filth may be removed, defects may be done away with, and even the slightest trace of spite and rancor may not be found in the faithful heart.

About the daily *Farz salat* (compulsory prayer) it has been clarified that its reward will not be given to a Muslim unless his heart is not found free from ill will against others, and is not bereft of all disputes, quarrel enmity and rancor against the people.
Allah's Messenger has said:
"There are three persons whose prayer does not rise even a fist above their heads. One is that man who leads the prayers of others who do not like it. Second is that woman who spends her night in such a way that her husband is displeased with her. And third are those two brothers who have severed their relations with each other."
(Ibn Maja)

Every week the acts of Muslims are evaluated. Allah sees every week what a Muslim has collected for the next world, and what feelings are hidden in his heart. If his bosom is free from spite and rancor, then he is saved from destruction, and if it is filled with the feeling of displeasure, jealousy and ill will then he remains backward in the field of action. Allah's Messenger has said:

"Every Monday and Thursday men's acts are placed before Allah. On these days Allah forgives the sins of everybody, except the polytheists. However, if there is a person who has spite and rancor against his brother, He says about them: "Leave these two alone in their condition till they come to a settlement."

(Muslim)

It is not correct for a Muslim that the days an nights may pass off and he should be shackled for the whole year in the chains of enmity and spite, and tied with the handcuffs of rancor and ill-will. Allah grant gifts to those who are sincere and broad-minded. In the *hadith* it is mentioned:

"In the night of the 15th of Sha'ban, Allah acquaints himself of the conditions of His slaves. So He forgives those who seek His pardon, bestows mercy on those seeking mercy, and leaves the spiteful people alone."

(Baihaqui)

Even after this much cleansing if a man leaves this world carrying the dirt and filth of spite, rancor and jealousy, then he deserves to be burnt in the fire of hell.

The man whose cleansing has not been possible by the , Shariah, the fire of hell will reach him and it will not be helpless in burning his sins and his enmity.

Spite and jealousy and the diseases which were created by them have been condemned by Islam, and they have developed and progressed because man is a prisoner of the world and the desires to achieve it, and the longing to enjoy the pleasures and luxuries of life to the utmost keep him in trouble.

But if some one is hated for Allah, if a man gets angry in the cause of truth, or if tumultuous enthusiasm and liking is displayed to achieve righteousness and virtue, then this is quite a different matter.

It is no sin for a Muslim if he severs his relation till the end of his life with such persons as disobey the commands of Allah, or who cross the limits of Shariah. If he hates such persons or declares his enmity towards them, then he cannot be blamed for that; on the contrary it is a sign of his perfect faith, selflessness and sincerity.

Allah has commanded us that we should keep away from His enemies, even if they may be our relatives:

"0 you who believe! Choose not your fathers nor your brethren for friends if they take pleasure

in disbelief rather than faith. Whosoever of you takes them for friends, such are wrongdoers."

One whose company is bad, who has the habits meanness and of talking glibly and endlessly, to keep away from such a one is necessary.

And one who has committed a wrong against Allah to punish such a one there is nothing wrong if that on is boycotted for a fixed period, because the Prophet had severed his relation with some of his wives for a period of forty days and Abdullah bin Umar did not have an relation with one of his sons till his death, because he had rejected one command of the Messenger of Allah.

His father, Abdullah bin Umar narrated a *hadith'* which women were allowed to go to the mosques, but his son had rejected this *hadith.*

CHAPTER 13

STRENGTH

Faith-A Revolutionary Strength

A firm and strong faith is such a never-drying spring, from which flow the strength for the desired activities, coveted courage and forbearance to tolerate adversities and to face dangers. It creates in man such a restless feeling and deep attachment to his ideal that if he is unable to achieve his coveted objective, he does *not* hesitate to partake of the drink of death.

When faith finds a place in a man's heart and takes deep roots in it, it brings out these results only. It fills a man's heart and mind with such power and strength that cover and influence all his dealings. Accordingly, when he opens his mouth, he talks with confidence and certainty. When he undertakes a work, he attends to it with full interest and sincerity. When he starts on a journey, his destination is before his eyes. If he enjoys the wealth of the correct end firm thinking, the world of the heart too is inhabited by the enthusiasm and restless courage. Hesitation and ambivalence do not find a place in his heart, and high-velocity winds do not move him from his path or make him deviate from his objective. It will not be surprising if he says to every one, in the words of an Urdu poet:

"Come here O tyrant! we will try our art,

"You try your arrow, and I will try my liver (courage)."

And he may challenge the people around him thus:

"You work in your manner, I too am acting. Soon you will know who will get disgraceful punishment, and who will get the everlasting punishment."

(Zumar : 39-40)

This challenging accent, this independent spirit in action and deeds, this self-confidence in understanding truth and tradition are the qualities which make him a distinguished personality in life. He deals with the people in the light of the facts seen and experienced by him. If he finds the people on a policy which is right f and truthful, he extends his hand for co-operation; and if he finds them committing errors, he withdraws himself, ,and leaves his conscience alive and wakeful.

Allah's Messenger has said:

"Everyone of you should desist from walking with every traveler. He should not say that he is with the people, and that if people would do good deed, he would also do the good deeds; and that if they would do wicked deeds then he would co-operate with them. You should prepare yourself to co-operate with them if they do righteous deeds and to keep away if they do wicked deeds."

(Tirmizi)

But one who is weak, the current customs and habits make one their slave. On such a man's conduct rule the things which are current in the society. If these customs and practices are wrong and destructive, then he carries the burden of the troubles of this world as well as of the next.

Among the people, various kinds of innovations have become customary on the occasions of celebrations and mourning. They pay more attention to performing these innovative acts than on the realities of the religion.

But a straight-going Momin does not take any interest in these things, for which there is no supportive proof in religion. He is confronted with opposition and experiences difficulties in opposing the popular and customary rituals, but it is obvious that he need not care for any condemnation from anybody in the affairs of Allah. He has to achieve his ideal. No weapon of criticism and fault-finding and no injuries from tongue can obstruct his way.

Falsehood which sometimes is successful is subsequently ruled by powerful individuals. They then destroy its position and rank. This also cannot stay for a long time with the help and support of its allies, because many enemies who are today with it, having been deceived by falsehood, tomorrow they would become the supporters of the other enemies; they approve of their aims and objects after knowing their character and pledge their support after severe hostility and spite.

Ibn Abbas has narrated that Allah's Messenger has said:

"He who has displeased Allah for seeking the pleasure of the people, Allah is displeased with him and those people are also displeased for pleasing whom he had earned Allah's displeasure. And he who pleases Allah by displeasing the people, Allah is also pleased with him and also those people whom he had displeased for pleasing Allah, so much so that He made him splendid and his speech and acts in the eyes of others beautiful."

(Tibrani)

A Muslim should stick to what he believes to be true, and he should ignore all the insults, fun-making, and difficulties with which he is confronted. He should adopt for himself such a policy through following which he should always try to get rewards *(sawab)* from Allah. If those, who believe in superstitions and absurd things, make fun of the faithful people and laugh at them, then it is necessary for a Momin to be strong and to stand his ground with firmness.

"When they see you, (0 Muhammed !) they treat you only as a jest (saying): Is this he whom Allah sends as a messenger? He would have led us far away from our gods if we had not been staunch to them. They will know, when they behold the doom, who is more astray as to the road."

(Furqan : 42-43)

No doubt, a Muslim must feel in his personality the strength of belief and in his heart the pressure and awe of faith. If the things around him do not influence him, then he is like a rock which is not moved by the lashing of the waves of the sea. What harm these men can inflict on a man who feels in his heart the strength of faith and belief, and on account of his relation with his Lord and steadfastness in his religion feels in himself a new determination and a fresh courage ? If all these rush and attack, they will not be able to harm him a bit.

Ibn Abbas says that he was sitting on a mount be- hind the Prophet. The Prophet said:

"O child! remember Allah, He will take care of you. Remember Allah, you will find Him everywhere. Recognize Allah's rights in your prosperity, He will recognize you in your adversity. If you want to ask anything, ask from Allah. If you need help, seek help from Allah, for if all the men together decide to help, they will not be able to do so, if Allah has not written that for you and they have no control over it. And if all of them decide to inflict some harm on you which Allah has not meant for you, they cannot harm you a bit. The ink of the pen has been dried and the sheets have been collected."

The fact is that in a Muslim the basis of strength and power is the belief in the oneness of Allah. Similarly other virtues prevent him from accepting any disgrace and insult in this world, because a Muslim is most honored and of high rank on account of his relationship with the heavens. In his own sphere of faith he has the power to become a whole community. These are Allah's words, speaking for him:

"Say: 'Shall I choose for a protecting friend other than Allah, the Originator of the heavens and the earth, who feeds and is never fed?' Say: 'I am ordered to be the first to surrender (to Him). And be not you (0 Muhammed !) of the idolaters'.'"

(An'am: 14).

Determination and Trust-the best Manifestation of Strength

Islam has declared achievement of strength and power essential. Its one characteristic and manifestation is that you make a firm determination and a strong resolve to achieve, with the help of your nearest available means and resources, your objective. Try your utmost in achieving your goal. You should leave no stone unturned and no room for chance, and thereafter leave the outcome in the hands of destiny. There are many individuals who take Allah's shelter in order to cover their objectionable defects reprehensible negligence, inability and laziness, and grumble against luck. Islam has disapproved of this tendency.

Auf bin Malik says that Allah's Messenger once gave a decision in a dispute of two people. When the man against whom the Prophet's decision was given was returning, said:

"For me Allah is sufficient, and He is the best support." The Prophet said: "Allah sends curses on helplessness and weakness. You should give proof of your wisdom. When you are overpowered in any matter say: 'For me Allah is sufficient, and He is the best support'."

(Abu Daud)

It is the duty of everybody that he should make full efforts and try to the best of his ability to overcome his difficulty, till the time he achieves his objective. If he overpowers his difficulties then he has fulfilled his responsibility.

However, if after making all the efforts he fails, then at such a time the support of Allah is the best shelter for him, which would help him to overcome the sense of defeatism and frustration. In both the states he is strong and powerful. First by making efforts and working, and in the second case by relying on God he receives strength.

Islam does not like that in your affairs you should be a prey to vagueness and hesitation, You should not be undecided in the matter of selecting the advantageous alternative. Your head should not be filled up with doubts and misgivings, resulting in an atmosphere of indetermination and indecision, making it difficult for you to come to a decision. It does not like that due to your weakness you may not be able to strongly hold the advantageous things in your firm grip, and they should slip through your fingers and may be wasted. This restlessness and indecision does not become a Muslim.

Allah's Prophet has said:

“ A strong Momin is better than a weak Momin and is more liked by Allah, and there is good ill each one. Desire profitable things and seek Allah's help and be humble. If you are harmed then do not say that had you done in this way the result would have been different, but say Allah is Controller, whatever He likes He may decide, because the botheration of ifs and buts opens the door of the devil's workshop."

(Muslim)

What is the work of Satan? To remind of the troubles and the difficulties of the past, which would create a sense of heart-breaking disappointment and de-privation. Man thinks about the prospects of his present and future. As regards shedding tears on the defeats of the past, to bring back the memory of the past sadness, to think of old enmities and to be entangled in the net of ifs and buts, are inclinations which do not suit the conduct of a Muslim. Quran has listed them with sorrow and frustration in those manifestations which are generated in the hearts of the infidels:

"0 you who believe ! Be not as those who disbelieved and said of their brethren who went abroad in the land or were fighting in the field : If they had been (here) with us they would not have died or been killed; that Allah may make it anguish in their hearts. Allah gives life and causes death and Allah is Observer of what you do."

(Ale Imran .. 156)

One *hadith* has it:

"One who wants to be strong among men, should rely on Allah."

Trust in Allah which makes a man powerful is a kind of confidence in Allah, which saves a man from destruction at a time when he is surrounded on all sides by harrowing difficulties, and when he is unable to get help from anyone else, nor is there any hope of getting it from elsewhere.

Accordingly he becomes a mountain of strength at the time of confrontation with the enemy. If the reliance is on Allah, then in spite of the shortage of weapons and war equipment and insufficient number of supporters, he feels that he has a strong support. From this trust in Allah he receives encouragement and support to be steadfast. He sticks to his job till in the dark and frightening atmosphere the glad tidings of victory are heard by him. The holy Quran says that trust is

such an eternal food for war that with its help prophets and their followers have bravely and successfully faced the tyrants of their time:

"How should we not put our trust in Allah when He has shown US our ways? We surely will endure that hurt you do us. In Allah let the trusting put their trust"

(Ibrahim: 12)

The faithful and their supporters stand their ground, sticking to their mandate. They have expectations of well-being in the future. They have full confidence that their present weakness will be converted into a powerful victorious force, but the wicked and evil rulers and their disciples term this determination and trust of the faithful as their pride and madness:

"When the hypocrites and those in whose hearts is a disease said: 'Their religion has deluded these. Whosoever puts his trust in Allah (will find that) surely, Allah is Mighty, Wise."

(AI-Anfal: 49)

The correct and true trust is that which accompanies profitable striving and firm determination. From these things trust became deprived when the face of Islam was disfigured and religion was made a plaything For becoming strong and powerful a Muslim should take care that he keeps away from the life of wickedness and evil, loves the policy of cleanness and steadfastness. A man who is ill mannered, and bereft of decency and consideration, cannot attain strength. He should put on the hide of the beasts and walk in the wake of the kings as a servant.

Allah informed the nation of Hud, that was tyrant and rebellious against Allah, the correct and profitable causes of strength:

"Ask forgiveness of your Lord, then turn to Him repentant ; He will cause the sky to rain abundance on you and will add to you strength to your strength. Turn not away, guilty."

(Hud: 52)

The kind Prophet wanted to present the worship to the people in a beautiful form and to persuade them to perform it. When a man performs a righteous deed, he opposes the Satan and tries to rise towards the angels. At that time how great becomes his sanctity and magnificence! To focus attention on this the Prophet has explained it by giving an example:

"When Allah created the earth, it tilted and was unsteady. Accordingly Allah put the stakes , (nails) of mountains in it, and it became steady, and stood in one position. The angels were amazed by the strength of the mountains. They asked the Creator: 'Our Lord! Have you created anything harder than the mountains ?' He replied: 'Yes, Iron is harder than this.' The angels again asked: "Is anything harder than iron ?' He said: 'Yes, Fire has more power,' They asked: 'Is there any- thing more powerful created by you than fire ? He said: 'Yes. Water is more powerful than this.' The angels asked: 'Does anything among your created things exist more powerful than water ? He said: 'Yes, air has more power than this.' They asked: : 'Have you created anything more powerful than air ?' He said: 'Yes. Adam's son is more powerful, provided he gives charity from his right hand without letting his left hand know it."

(Tirmizi)

Man is the strangest creature of the universe. The day his personality attains greatness and excellence of moral character he becomes the hunter of the universe. He brings under his control the hardest and the most powerful things of the universe, and derives benefit from it. But the day when his personality declines, he earns the curses of the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth, and the particles of dust carry him with them in their flight.

In the *hadith* quoted above the value and importance of such a virtuous man has been mentioned who tries to forge ahead in the field of righteousness and who tries to touch the heights of excellence and decency.

One factor of strength is that a Muslim should be in the habit of stating the truth unhesitatingly. He should meet people with an open heart, and on the basis of righteous values and principles. He should not compromise in the matter of truth, so that his decency and his companions' character may not be tarnished.

He should consider his strength a direct outcome of his belief which he represents and for which he is alive. He should never waver in unhesitatingly and courageously proving a reality.

It is reported that when the Prophet's son Ibrahim died, the sun went into an eclipse. The people said that the eclipse was due to the death of Ibrahim. Allah's Messenger gave a sermon to the people, and said:

"The eclipse of the sun and the moon are not on account of the death or life of some person, but they both are the signs of Allah, which He shows to His slaves. So when you see the eclipse of the sun or the moon, you run for offering salat."

(Bukhari)

A man who breathes in the atmosphere of realities, does not compromise with falsehood and absurdities. He is always indifferent to such things, and his uncompromising words point to the vast treasure of greatness and nobility, whose owner does not derive any benefit from deception and his character, stands on the rock of excellent moral character.

The performance of the duty of ordering the righteous thing and preventing the commitment of the forbidden thing comes from the personal excellence, because it results from the courageous talk of the sincere people who want to earn Allah's reward by ending their own egoist leanings.

In our other books we have explained the social and political objectives which is related to the performance of the righteous and the forbidding of the forbidden. (Author's Arabic book)

Here what we want to emphasize is that a Muslim must necessarily straight away criticize the general evils, should be courageous in attacking them. neither the fear of a big man nor the consideration for a relative should prevent him from doing the right thing, and in the path of Allah no condemnation from any source should block his away.

Islam has disliked that a man should feel weak in the presence of wicked and evil persons, and should address them in a respectable way. Allah's Messenger has said: "When a man addresses a hypocrite as 'Ya Sayyedi' (My master), he makes Allah very wrathful."

This is a double crime that a man should not respect the Allah's commands about forbidden things, and then he should only listen to those who think him respectable and should not care for those who consider him mean and humble:

"He whom Allah scorns. there is none to give him honor. Surely, Allah does what He will."

(Hajj: 18)

Islam has declared backbiting as *haram,* so that man's life may continue and the factors of strength may remain in it, for the man who states the defects of a person in his absence and derives satisfaction from it, is undoubtedly very mean and low.

But the man who has the strength to respond to the motivation and call of truth, he stops those whom he likes, in whatever manner and words he thinks proper he criticizes them. He does not keep anything hidden in his heart for condemning anybody behind the scene.

However it does not mean that we may address anybody whom we like in an insulting way. If we find any defects in persons, we may fix up certain] norms about dealing with them.

If his defect is limited to his own person or if it is not in consonance with his position, then it would be foolish to castigate him in his presence or in his absence.

And if his steps are slipping towards a sin, and he does not seem to be in a mood to give it up like a horse who flounders and falls on his face then to defame such a person among the people is meanness.

However, if he is a blatant sinner, and he openly breaks the rights of Allah and usurps the rights of his fellow men, then it is necessary that he should be opposed with the words of truth and without caring for anybody he should be properly warned.

Since this dialogue has to be straight, it is necessary that curses and abuses should be avoided and physical hurt should be averted. The purpose should be to change the bad habit and to reform the individual and the society. It does not mean that his mention before his enemies should be in demeaning words, so that you may get closer to their hearts, or may derive some benefits or may claim yourself to be innocent of those sins. Allah's Messenger has said:

"He who has eaten food in exchange for the honor of a Muslim, Allah will feed him fire of hell in compensation on the Doomsday; and he who put on clothes in exchange for dishonoring a Muslim, Allah will clothe him in compensation with the cloth of hell fire; and if he who earned respect and fame by playing with the chastity of a Muslim, Allah will make him taste fully for this on the Doomsday."

(Abu Daud)

Backbiting is the policy of the weak persons, and "only those people try to indulge in backbiting who are unable to strive for themselves."

Sycophants are Disliked by Islam

Islam dislikes those persons who become merely a supplement of other people, those persons who live on the charity of others, those who want to live like foxes that is content with eating the remnants of a Lion's prey.

A Muslim is much above this kind of living, to maintain himself in this superficial way on the support of others. It is necessary that he should shun all places or situations of insults and ignominy, and should go to the end of the world in search of a life of honor and dignity.

Allah's Messenger has talked of the people of the Paradise and their companions, and the people of the hell and their companions. Accordingly he has mentioned in the first group the good qualities and advantages of strength, decency and morality, while in the other group he has mentioned the infamy, ignominy, helplessness and immoral enjoyments.

"People of paradise will be of three kinds. First that powerful man who was just and balanced in his dealings, who popularized the practice of charity and virtue, and adopted the attitude of softness and rightness. Second will be that person who was kind, who was soft hearted for every relative and every Muslim. Third will be that person who having a wife and children, yet was able to save himself from the forbidden things. In the people of the hell will be that dishonest person whose greed will not be discernible, but he would be indulging in misappropriation, that man who may deceive you every morning and evening in connection with your property and your family. And the Prophet talked about miserliness, falsehood, speaker of vulgarity and ill-mannered person, and said:

"Allah has inspired me to say that you should be humble and none should feel proud, nor should anyone oppress others."

(Muslim)

Although many occasions come when a Muslim is caught in dilemmas and sometimes he feels mean in his own eyes, if he is bound by these melancholic handcuffs. Accordingly the fear of individual infamy and social ignominy sometimes compel a man to be inactive.

He thinks on wrong lines and considers these misfortunes as bad omen. His productivity in the field of life reduces considerably. But it is the responsibility of a Muslim that he should break all these chains of sorrow and adversities and should strive fully to extricate himself from these crippling curbs.

The last Prophet of Allah used to pray for shelter under his Lord from all these adversities:

"O Allah! I seek shelter through you from sorrow and hardship. I seek shelter from humility and laziness, and through you seek shelter from cowardice and miserliness, from the defeat of the religion and from the cruelty and tyranny of the oppressors."

(Abu Daud)

Patience and hope are the weapons of the present and the future. In their company man is able to bear the severest of the hardships and is not disgraced, and all sides of his life become more safe from evils, and he rises above the mischief and trials, because he is a Momin a faithful slave who begs and supplicates in humbles before Allah only.

CHAPTER 14

TOLERANCE AND PARDON

Tolerance and Forbearance

People react differently to the motivations and the occasions that generate feelings of sorrow and pain.

Some people are provoked by ordinary things, and they become unmindful of every thing and in haste take a very unwise step. But there are also such persons as pass through various hardships and adversities and yet do not forget to behave with seriousness, wisely, with tolerance and good manners.

It is true that the original nature of a man and his natural temperament playa very big part in a man's being hot-tempered or softhearted, serious or hasty, righteous or wicked. But there is a very deep relation between a man's self-confidence and his solemn behavior with others and in forgiving the errors of others. In reality, the more good mannered and perfect a big man is, in the same proportion his heart will be big and the circle of his tolerance and forbearance will be wide. He will try to find the extenuating circumstances for the errors of others and will accept their apologies when offered. If anybody may attack him with the intention of injuring him, he will look at him as a philosopher looks at the children playing marbles on the roads, and will ignore him.

We have seen that anger makes a man mad. A man is disgraced in his own sight, when he feels that he has been put to great humiliation, and feels that this blot cannot be removed without shedding blood.

Can a man who has high moral character take such a step merely because he has to pass through sorrow and pain? Never. Those who indulge in inflicting insults on others are disgraced in their own eyes before insulting others.

This is what we understand from the tolerance and forbearance shown by Hud. He invited his nation to accept the belief of oneness of Allah. His nation greeted him with abuses, curses and accusations which he tolerated peacefully. The people of his nation said:

"Indeed, we see you in foolishness, and surely, we deem you of the liars. He said.. 'O my people!

There is no foolishness in me, but I am a messenger from the Lord of the Worlds. I convey to you the message of my Lord and am for you a true adviser'." ,

(AI-A'raf.. 66-68)

The abusing and the curses of the Nation of Hud did not provoke him, because there is a lot of difference between the two groups. On the one side is a man whom God has selected to be His Messenger. He is a representative of goodness and righteousness. On the other side are persons who are imbedded in ignorance and foolishness, and vying with each other in worshipping stones. On account of their foolishness they think that the stone idols are the masters of their destiny. How can a great teacher be disheartened by the misbehavior of such a flock ?.

How Allah's Messenger imbibed the qualities of tolerance and forbearance to his companions can be understood from the following tradition, which shows the foolishness of an Arab and the love and serenity of the Prophet.

It is reported that a Bedouin came to the Prophet and asked for something, and the Prophet gave him something, and asked: "Did I treat you well 1" The Bedouin replied: "No, you have not treated me well." Hearing this, the Muslims got angry and advanced towards him. The Prophet made a sign to stop them. Then he got up and went to his house and gave him some more gift, and again asked: "Did I treat you well ?" He replied: "Yes, may Allah grant prosperity to your family." The Prophet said to him: "Whatever you have said to me, is alright in its place, but my companions are angry in regard to you, if you like you may repeat before them whatever you have said to me so that the anger from their heart may be removed." He said that it was agreeable to him. When the morning came, he came again, and the Prophet pointed towards him and said: "On what this Arab had said, I gave him something more, and now he says that he is happy and pleased. Is that so ?" The Bedouin replied: "Yes, May Allah grant prosperity to your family."

Then Allah's Messenger said: "My example and that of this man is like that of a man whose she-camel bas been lost and the people ran after her to catch her, but the animal was more startled; so that man told his companions: 'Leave me and my she-camel alone, I know her ways more and I can bring her to the right path,' Accordingly he lifted some grass from the ground in his two hands and showed it to the she-camel. it returned and sat near his feet, He tied the 'kajawa' on her back and rode her,"

"If I were to leave you when he was using foul language, you would have killed him and he would have been sent to hell,"

The kind Prophet was not provoked in the beginning from the misbehavior of the bedouin, He understood his nature and temperament, which was like that of the illiterates who are habituated to wild and foul language, if such people are summarily punished, then they will be destroyed and it would be unjust.

But the great reformers do not allow the errors of people reach such a sad end. They try to remove the. ignorance and emotionalism of the people by their tolerance and forbearance, so persistently that they have to turn to rigorous things, and they become all praise for them.

The wisest of the wise intellectual and the wealthiest man cannot reach his destination, however charitable and generous he may be. Of what use is that charity which is meant for making people indebted to the giver?

It is not unlikely that the bedouin whose satisfaction was bought by giving him money might have become a wealthy man himself subsequently and he might have performed a great deed by giving his life willingly. In reality the wealth given by such great reformers is meant for such needy people, or in other words such a wealth is like the grass growing on the ground which is lifted in the hands and shown to the startled she-camel, and by means of it and by a little display of love the astray mounts are called near so that they may be used for traveling great distances.

The holy Prophet sometimes used to get angry, but he never crossed the limits of decency and the stage of pardon and forgiveness. How bright is this aspect of his character that he never took revenge for his own person, but he never hesitated in taking revenge from the man who violated the sanctity of Allah's laws.

Once when he was distributing the booty, one rough bedouin insulted him by saying: "Deal with justice," because in the distribution of this booty only Allah's pleasure was sought. The Prophet did not say anything more than this: "Fie on you. If I will not deal justly then who else will? If I did not do like this, then I failed, and I sustained a loss." With these words he gave an answer to his ignorance and also stopped his companions from killing the bedouin, which they otherwise would have done.

Pardon and Forgiveness

Once at the time of *Asr,* (Middle prayer) in his speech to the people he said:

"Adam's sons have been created of different types. There are some who get angry late and very soon return to normal. Some people become wrathful soon and soon they return to normal, and some people become angry late and are also late in returning to normal, that is the return to normalcy is according to the speed of getting angry. Be careful. Some people get angry soon and they return to normal late. Listen, the best people among these are those who get angry late and immediately repent, and the worst among these are those who get angry soon, but are very late in coming to normal. Listen, among these there are some who repay the loan in a better way, and also demand in a good way. Some people are lazy in repaying, but good in demanding. Some demand in a bad way and repay in a good way, i.e. they have one good quality and one bad quality. Some people prove to be bad in demanding and in repaying too. Listen carefully, the best among these are those who are good in demanding and also good in repaying, and the worst are those who are bad in both the things.

"Keep in mind, anger becomes a spark in the heart of Adam's son. Do you not see that at the time of anger a man's eyes become red, and his , nostrils become enlarged. If anyone sees these signs in a man, he should be glued to the earth."

(Tirmizi)

That is, he should sit in his place, he should not move so that the mater may not get worsened.

Because the flames of anger and wrath burn all matters. Intelligence and consciousness disappear from It, and man is imprisoned in the magic of passions. Then these affairs do not improve.

The above quoted *hodith* explains the kinds of men and their achievements and value in greatness and morality. Wherever necessary, a faithful bends himself.

An angry man indulges into various kinds of foolishness. Sometimes he abuses the door if it does not open immediately for him. In his anger he breaks whatever machine or its part may be in his hand, and abuses the animal that is not brought under control.

A man's sheet was flown away by the wind and he cursed it. Allah's Messenger said:

"Do not curse it, because it is bound by the commands of God and it is under His control. He who curses a thing which did not deserve it then the curse returns on him."

(Tirmizi)

There are many evils of anger, and their results are more devastating. It is therefore said that to keep the self in control at the time of anger is the proof of the praise-worthy power of control and the noble strength of toleration.

Ibn Masood has narrated that Allah's Messenger had asked:

"Whom do you call a sandow " People replied: "One who is not knocked down by anybody is called a sandow among us." He said: "No, sandow is one who controls his self in his anger."

(Muslim)

One man requested the Prophet:

"Give me some but not such a lengthy one that I may forget."

The Prophet said: "Do not be angry."

(Malik).

What reply could be better and shorter than this one?

Allah's Messenger always gave Importance to the temperament and the environment of the individuals and groups in giving them instructions and training. He used to lengthen or shorten his speech according to the demands of the occasion.

The efforts which were made to remove the *jahiliya* had two foundations:

One was ignorance against learning and the second against tolerance. The first ignorance he removed with the help of knowledge, understanding, sermons and advice, while the second was removed with the help of suppressing the rebellious desires and preventing mischief, etc. The Arabs of the pre-Islamic days were proud of their ignorance and wickedness. As an Arab Poet of the time says:

"Beware! None should show any ignorance and wickedness before us, else we would prove to be more ignorant and wicked than all"

When Islam came, it removed this intensity of feeling and emotionalism, and introduced the practice of pardon and forgiveness in the society. If one could not pardon, then one was given the command to act justly. This objective could be achieved only when anger and wrath could be kept under the control of the intellect. There are a number of sayings in which the Prophet has given directions to the Arabs leading them to this ideal, so much so that the manifestations of tyranny, aggression, anger and wrath have been declared out of the circle of Islam. The things which unite a group and do not allow it to be disturbed, abuse, etc., has been declared to be the agent which breaks this unity :-

"Abusing by a Muslim is wickedness, and his quarrelling and fighting is infidelity."

(Bukhari)

"When two Muslims meet, a curtain from Allah is hung between them. When one of the two says obscene things to the other he tears this curtain of Allah."

(Baihaqui)

One Arab came to the Prophet to learn the teachings of Islam. Before this he had neither seen the Prophet nor did he know about his message. His name was Jabir bin Salim. He narrates:

"I saw a man whose opinions are being copied by the people. If he says anything, people convey it to others. I asked them who this man was. They said that he is Allah's Messenger. I said to him: 'On you be peace (Alaik-as-Salam) O Messenger of Allah!' He said: 'Do not salute like this. This is the salute of the dead; but say Peace be on you (As-Salamu Alaik)'."

That Arab says: "I asked: 'Are you Allah's Messenger?' He replied: 'I am the messenger of that Being whom you call in adversities, and he removes your adversities, and if famine catches you and you call Him. He grows grass for you; and if you lose your mount in the arid ground, then you call Him and He causes your mount to be returned to you."

He says that I told him: "Advise me." The Prophet said: "Do not abuse anybody." Accordingly, thereafter I did not abuse any free man, slave, camel, goat. Then he said: 'Do not consider any virtue as mean, even if it is your brother's talking to you with a smile. This is also a virtuous act.' Then he said: 'If somebody reproaches you and makes you feel ashamed on any of your defects, do not make him feel ashamed on any of his defects, because this act of his will prove troublesome for him."

(Abu Daud)

Rebuking and Reproaching is a Sign of Meanness

There are also some people whose anger does not cool down. They are always in a turmoil, and this wrathfulness imprints a stamp of stone-heartedness and harshness on their face. If anybody clashes with them they spit fire like an oven. Anger, wrath, squeezing of the nostrils and reddening of the eyes, and then there starts a series of abusing and cursing. Islam is innocent of all these dirty qualities.

Allah's Messenger has said:

"A Momin does not taunt, does not curse and reproach, does not indulge in obscene talking and obscene acts."

(Tirmizi)

Cursing and reproaching are the signs of meanness, and it is a quality of lowliness. Those who curse others for ordinary things, they put themselves to great ruin. It is the duty of a man that he should avoid this unseemly act, even if he is harmed considerably by his opponent. As faith will be nourished in the heart, along with it will grow generosity, broad-mindedness, tolerance and forbearance, and there will grow hatred of anger for the usurpers of our rights and dislike for the desire for their destruction.

The Prophet was requested to invoke God's wrath against the polytheists and to curse them. He said:

"I have been sent as a blessing (Rehmat). I have not been sent as a rebuker and reproacher ."

(Muslim)

A Muslim however much he would control his self, however much he would control his anger, would pardon others' errors, and however much would sympathies with others on their mistakes, in the same proportion his rank will be raised before Allah.

For this reason, the Prophet disapproved of Hazrat Abu Bakr when he cursed his slave, and said:

"How can it be proper for a truthful man that he should rebuke and reproach."

(Muslim)

In another tradition it is mentioned that the Prophet has said:

"It is not possible that you indulge in rebuking and reproaching and at the same time remain *siddique* (truthful) and straight."

(Hakim)

Hazrat Abu Bakr, to atone for his error, freed his slave and went to the Prophet for apologizing and said that he would not. do such a thing again.

The reason for this is that rebuking and reproaching is such an evil as is more expressive of one's blind rage than the idea of punishing others. It is not at all proper to insult others by yelling at them.

Allah's Messenger has said:

"When a man curses somebody, then that curse rises up to the sky, but finds the gates of the sky shut. Then it turns to the earth. Here also the gates are found shut. Therefore it wanders to the right and to the left, and if it does not find a proper place it goes to the man who was cursed. If he deserved it, well and good, otherwise it returns to the man who cursed."

(Abu Daud)

Cursing and Abusing is Haram

Islam has declared cursing and abusing, exchange of vulgar and obscene words and acts as *haram* (forbidden).

Many clashes occur in which people's honor is attacked and a series of exchange of accusations and fault-finding ensues. The reputation of the relatives, and the female folk of the household is damaged and attempts are made to rake up the dust of centuries. There is only one cause of all this dirty sinning, and that is man is overcome by anger and he washes his hands off all decency and good manners.

The entire responsibility for committing this low and mean type of sin goes to the head of the man who first put the spark to the combustible material. It is written in the *hadith* :

"The entire sin for mutual abusing and cursing will be on the man who first started it, except when the oppressed crosses the limit."

(Muslim)

There is only one way of escaping these intense passions, and that is that tolerance and forbearance may be allowed to have an upper hand over anger and rage, and pardon and forgiveness may be allowed to rule over the passion of taking revenge.

There is no doubt that when a man's own personality or that of his relative or friends is attacked and when he is made to suffer, and he has the means and resources for taking revenge, then he wants to avenge himself immediately and does not rest till he satisfies his passion for revenge.

Hardness be Replied with Softness

But in such cases another policy can be adopted which is much nobler and is liked by Allah, which shows a man's greatness and his regard for relationship and that is that he should control his anger, and should not indulge in abusing and cursing. He should restrain himself and should not be bent on taking revenge. He should consider the overlooking of the errors of the wrongdoers as a kind of gratitude to Allah, who has given him such a position that whenever he may want he may take back his right.

Ibn Abbas narrates that when Ainia bin Hasn came, he stayed in the house of his nephew Hur bin Qais, who was greatly respected by Hazrat Umar, because the readers of the Quran were the members of the Consultative Committee of Hazrat Umar, whether they were old or young.

The uncle asked the nephew to take him to the Amir-ul-Mumineen, Umar bill A1-Khattab. Accordingly permission was sought, and when both of them went in the presence of Umar, he very harshly said to the Khalifa :

“ A pity on you, O son of Khattab ! because you neither give us gifts nor do you deal with us justly." Hazrat Umar was enraged on this and wanted to punish him.

The nephew, Hur, immediately intervened and said: “ Amirul Mumineeen ! Allah says to his Prophet: I Adopt the method of softness and forgiveness, advise for doing righteous deeds and do not clash with uneducated. This man is uneducated, he may be forgiven.'

Accordingly, the Amir of the Faithful forgave him and did not deviate slightly from the teachings of those verses when it were recited before him and he was the true follower of the Book of Allah."

(Bukhari)

Hazrat Umar was enraged because that Arab had come merely to provoke him. The idea of punishing him came to his mind because he bad not gone there with the intention of giving right advice or reform. The only purpose of his going there was to rebuke the Amirul Mumineen and to receive rich gifts without working for them. But when he was told that the man was uneducated, be controlled his anger and allowed him to go free.

It is written in a *hadith* :

"He who controls his anger though he had the power to act on it, Allah will call him first of all on the Day of Judgment and will give him the authority to select whatever Hourie he likes."

(Abu Daud)

Ibada bin Samit says that the Prophet has said:

"May I not tell you those qualities for which Allah will give you tall buildings in the Paradise and He may raise your rank ?" The people said: "Certainly, tell us O Messenger of Allah !" He said: "He who behaves with you in the manner of an uneducated person, you behave with him with tolerance, forgive the oppressors, and give to those who deprive you, and he who cuts away from you, try to join him. "

(Tibrani)

Quran has declared these decent habits and qualities as the path of welfare by which a man can enter the Paradise.

"Be quick in the race for forgiveness from your Lord, and for a Paradise whose width is that (of the whole) of the heavens and of the earth, prepared for the righteous,-those who spend (freely) whether in prosperity or in adversity; who restrain anger, and pardon (all) men ;for Allah loves those who do good."

(AI-i-Imran.. 133-134)

The Excellent Example

The way in which the Prophet ignored Abdullah bin Ubai, the leniency which he showed him, and the manner in which he overlooked his crimes, are instances whose example cannot be found in the entire human history. Abdullah bin Ubai was the worst enemy of the Muslims. He used to be always in search for finding out ways of inflicting injuries and damages to Muslims and he was in league with the devil against the Muslims. He never let slip any opportunity of harming Muslims, of defeating them and spreading a network of conspiracies against them. He cast aspersions on the chastity of the Mother of the Faithful, Hazrat Ayesha, and he incited some people to indulge in the whispering campaign against her and thus weaken the foundation of the Islamic society, as from the ancient times the eastern traditions had given a very high position of decency and nobility to women.

For this reason the Messenger of Allah and his dear companions were terribly distressed and were in great mental anguish. They were in a great dilemma on account of this blatant false accusation, till at last the verses of Surah Noor were revealed which refuted the charges of the hypocrites, vouchsafed the chastity and purity of Hazrat Ayesha and exposed the machinations of the enemies:

"Those who brought forward the lie are a body among yourselves ,. think it not to be an evil to you " on the contrary it is good for you.. to every man among them (will/ come the punishment) of the sin that he earned and to him who took on himself the lead among them, will be penalty grievous."

***(Hoor..* 11)**

In this tragedy, those who had openly accused the Ummul Mumineen were punished, but the germ which bad spread this disease was not touched, so that he might further go on with his nefarious activities of harming Muslims.

Allah blesses His Prophet and his armies with victory and glory. Islam refined the disorderly government of the centuries and reformed the corrupt society. The enemies of Islam were then found within the limits of the Islamic society, Abdullah bin Ubai was pining within himself till he fell ill and died, after leaving the bad and deadly odour of disruption behind him. His sons went to Prophet seeking his pardon for their father. He forgave him. Then the son requested for the Prophet's shirt for the shroud of his father. He gave it to them. Then they requested him to lead his funeral prayer and to pray for their father. The gracious Prophet did not refuse even this request of theirs. He stood up to pray for the salvation of the person who in the past had attacked his honor and reputation.

But Allah denied to grant all these concessions, and this verse was revealed:

"Whether you ask for their forgiveness or not, (their sin is unforgivable).. if you ask seventy times for their forgiveness, Allah will not forgive them.. because they have rejected Allah and His Prophet.. and Allah guides not those who are perversely rebellious."

(Tauba.. 80)

In this tragic event of false accusation was also involved a near relative of Hazrat Abu Bakr, who was living on his help, This man did not hesitate to falsely accuse the pure and chaste lady, whose father was giving him help and was sustaining him. He forgot the right of Islam, and did not care for the relationship, and tore to pieces the old custom, Hazrat Abu Bakr was deeply stirred and he swore that he would not give anything to this near relative of his and would not show any kindness to him as in the past. Thereupon the following command from Allah was revealed:

"Let not those among you who are endued with grace and amplitude of means resolve by oath against helping their kinsmen, those in want, and those who have left their homes in Allah's cause; let them forgive and overlook; do you not wish that Allah should Forgive you? For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."

(*Noor:* 22)

Accordingly, Abu Bakr restarted helping his relative saying: "I like that Allah may pardon me,"

CHAPTER 15

PHILANTHROPY AND BENEVOLENCE

Generosity-An Essential Part of a Muslim's Conduct

Islam is a religion whose foundation has been kept on charity, generosity, and philanthropy. Narrow mindedness, greed and miserliness are evils that shake its edifice. Therefore Islam likes that its followers should be generous and charitable. It has advised them to treat others kindly, to act righteously, to help their kinsmen and to do all kinds of good and virtuous deeds. It has stressed on its followers to make righteous living a permanent policy:

"Those who spend (in charity) their wealth by night and by day; in secret and in public, have their reward with their Lord " there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve.

(Baqarah: 274)

It is the responsibility of every Muslim that in meeting his needs he should act in a balanced way, so that he may not spend all his wealth on his personal needs only, but that it is his duty that he should let others also partake of the blessings which Allah has bestowed on him, and that he should allot a part of his wealth for the help and assistance of the poor and needy persons. Allah's Messenger has said:

"O Adam's son ! Spend your wealth, it is good for you. And do not block it, it is bad for you, and the wealth according to the need cannot be reproached. Spend first for your family and dependents, and the raised hand is better than the lowered hand."

(Muslim)

Quran has very clearly hinted at this subject when it has commanded the Muslims to spend for their kinsmen and the needy persons and prevented wasteful spending. A spendthrift wastes his wealth and indulges in foolishness. He spends his excess wealth for his personal pleasures, then what can remain with him for payment of the rights of others and the necessary assistance to the needy persons?

Allah has commanded:

"And render to the kindred their due rights, as (also) to those in want. and to the wayfarer.. but squander not (your wealth) in the ,manner of a spendthrift. Verily, spendthrifts are the brothers of Satans, and the Satan is to his Lord ungrateful."

(Bani Israil: 26, 27)

And after this, advice is given to be mindful of the sentiments of the needy and the people in want, and their feelings should not be hurt. If there is nothing that can be given to them, they should be refused softly and in a decent way:

"And even if you have to turn away from them in pursuit of the Mercy of your Lord which you do expect, speak to them a word of easy kindness."

(Bani Israil: 28)

Islam's call to its followers to spend in the cause of Allah and for charity is famous and well known. Similarly its war against miserliness, greed and narrow-mindedness is as clear as the day.

One *hadith* has it :

" A giver of charity is near to Allah, is near to humans, and is near to Paradise and away from hell. And a miser is away from Allah, is away from humans, away from the Paradise and is near to hell. An uneducated giver of charity is liked more by Allah than a miserly worshipper."

(Tirmizi)

There does not exist any system in this world, and there is also no possibility of its existence, in which all the people may be indifferent to and not in need of mutual co-operation. As long as there are power and weakness, wealth and poverty side by side in the human society, it is necessary for achieving peace and satisfaction and for ensuring the success and security of the society that the strong should be kind to the weak, and that wealthy should favor the poor and needy with gifts and donations.

If wealth and property are amassed as a result of the capabilities and striving of the people, then some people amass lot of riches and some people get only the bare necessities. And this cannot be objected to. The question regarding misfortune and ungratefulness arise when these people live a life away from the society, when they are concerned only with meeting their own personal needs and for providing for their own pleasures and luxuries, when Allah has caused the people to live together, and has declared this togetherness of theirs, instead of differences in their circumstances, a severe trial for them. This provides a test for their faith and an opportunity for proving their worth.

" *We have made some of you as trials for others. Will you have patience? For Allah is One Who see" (all things)."*

(Furqan .. 20)

A community can be successful in this field of life only when the relationship among its individuals is strong and firm. No individual of the community should be so deprived that he may be facing a life of starvation and no wealthy man of the community should be so greedy that he may be spending his wealth only for his own personal pleasures and luxuries.

To achieve this high objectives Islam has framed very strong laws. Peoples' hearts have been prepared to indulge in righteous and virtuous deeds, and they have been tempted to co-operate with each other, help each other and act righteously. It explained to them that the benefit of spending in the cause of Allah is not only derived by the poor and needy persons but the givers of charity also achieve the invaluable riches of peace and satisfaction; their hearts are protected from the earthquakes of rancor and jealousy, and they are saved from the adverse consequences of selfishness and narrow- mindedness :

“ ***Behold, you are those invited to spend in the way of Allah.. but among you are some that are niggardly. But any who are niggardly are so at the expense of their own souls. But Allah is free of all wants, and it* is *you that are needy."***

***(Muhammed:* 38)**

Poverty destroys all Charm

Poverty and want is a condition which causes a lot of trouble for men. It throws him down from the position which Allah had given him, and there is always a lurking fear that it may deprive him from that nobleness for which Allah has declared him the best of all the creatures.

Human nature does not like to see any person in dirty, torn and tattered clothes, that would expose a man's defects; there should be no footwear to cover his feet, or his heels and fingers are dragging on the road, or he is hungry for a number of days; he may be looking greedily at tasty and luscious food and be unable to taste it.

Those who see such sad and sorrowful scenes and are not moved by them at alt, they are not humans; they are not Muslims. To feel disturbed and sorry by seeing the plight of the unhappy men is common human nature. One who is bereft of this basic quality is not a human; he is a stone. As an Urdu poet says:

"Man was created for sympathy (by Allah), Otherwise there was no dearth of angles for worshipping Him."

The question before faith is that it should frighten men from their Lord in relation to the condition of such helpless and poor people.

Once the Prophet of Islam saw such a scene. The tears rolled out from his eyes, and he was very much perturbed. He gathered all the Muslims and delivered a very effective speech. He reminded them of the rights of men on men and their duties. He warned them of the punishment from Allah and the consequences in the Hereafter. His speech was so effective that the people who were present there, freely donated whatever they could, with the result that so much money was collected that the man whose condition had so moved the Prophet became a wealthy man from this spontaneous help from the companions of the Prophet, and all his defects were covered. '

Jarir has narrated: "We were in the company of the Prophet in the morning. Some people came in his presence. They were ill-clad. Their sheets were torn from various places. Many of them belonged to the tribe of Bani Madhar. When the Prophet saw their starving condition. his face changed color. He went into his house and then came out and asked Bilal to give Azan. He called the faithful to prayer and the Prophet led the prayer. Then he delivered a speech, and said:

"O People! Fear your Lord, who created you from a single person, created, of like nature, his mate; and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women ; fear Allah through Whom you demand your (rights) of one another, and to towards the womb (that bore you). Verily, Allah ever watches over you."

(An-Nisa: 1)

"O People who believe! fear Allah, and every person should see what he has prepared for his future."

(Hashr: 18)

Then the Prophet said:

"Everyone should give in charity dinar, dirham, cloth, dates, wheat, etc." He went on till he urged: "Give, even' if it is a stone of a date."

The narrator says that after this a man from Ansar brought a bag so full that it was slipping from his hand and it fell to the ground before he reached the Prophet. Other people also brought things to be given in charity, till there were two big heaps of eatable goods and clothes. At that time I saw that the face of the Prophet glowed with joy as if it was gold. Then he said:

"Anybody who inducted a good Sunnah in Islam, he will get its reward *(sawab)* and then also the reward of others acting on it, without there being any reduction in the reward of these who act on that Sunnah.

And anybody who inducted a bad system in Islam, he will get the punishment for it and also the punishment of all those who will act on it, without there being any reduction in the punishment of those who act on it."

(Muslim)

These eloquent words invite us to compete in matters of righteousness and we should try to vie with each other in performing virtuous deeds, e.g. social welfare work during inclement weather, or relief work after natural calamities, etc., etc.

On the other hand these words warn those who introduce bad practices in the society, and by this they increase the problems and complications of the society, and they leave their successors to face the ill consequences of their acts.

Charity A Guarantee for the Success in the World and Salvation in the Hereafter

It is human nature to love wealth and to be greedy to get it. For this a man travels long. distances and bears various kinds of troubles. The disease of selfishness and a tendency of giving preference to his own benefits over all other things are there in a man from the first day. He thinks about himself more and cares little for others.

If he is given the entire wealth of the earth, nay, even if he gets the treasures of the blessings of his Lord, he will not be prepared to spend from it willingly, and different kinds of diseases of selfishness will tie his hands.

"Say (O Prophet !) If you get the treasures of my Lord in your possession, you would have blocked it from fear of its being spent. Verily, man is narrow- minded."

(Bani Israil: 100)

Islam has considered this kind of thinking and mentality as very cheap and mean, and it is to be resisted vehemently. It is to be counted with alertness and cleverness. Islam has very clearly stated that only that man can be successful in achieving the rewards in this and the next world who removes the motivations of narrow- mindedness and niggardliness and nourishes charity and generosity:

"So fear Allah as much as you can.. listen and obey.. and spend in charity for the benefit of your own souls.. and those saved from the covetousness of their own souls,-they are the ones that achieve prosperity."

(*Taghabun:* 16)

Heaps of silver and gold from which the rights of poor and needy persons are not met become the causes of their owner's punishment and disgrace in this world and in the next. Such wealth is like the snakes which are hiding in their holes and arc waiting to bite men. Islam has clarified that this wealth will be turned into living snakes on the Doomsday, and this snake will be chasing for attacking and biting its owner.

"The wealthy man who has not paid the rights of others from his wealth, his treasure will become a snake on the Doomsday, which will chase him with open mouth, then a voice will be heard: 'Catch hold of your wealth which you had concealed, and I am unconcerned with this. When he will see that there is no escape, he will put his hand in its mouth, and it will bite him as a bull eats the grass."

(Bukhari)

Islam explains to the man that his love for wealth leads him near destruction, and that if he ponders over the reality of wealth and its consequences he will realize that charity is better than selfishness and that gift is nobler than miserliness.

"Man will say : my wealth, my wealth, although his wealth was of three kinds: whatever he ate, drank and finished it; or had spent un clothes and they were torn; or he gave to others and stored for the Hereafter, and what was other than this has been finished or has been left for the people."

(Muslim)

It is strange that what a man leaves for others, he expresses harshness in that. If he will not use his wealth for bettering his own economic condition and for the welfare in the Hereafter, then from what else will he try to derive benefit?

The holy Prophet disclosed this reality, when he said:

"Who is there among you that likes the wealth of his inheritor more than his own wealth ?" The Companions replied: "O Messenger of Allah! We like our own wealth." The Prophet then said: "The wealth of each one of you is what he has sent to God, and the wealth of the inheritor is what each one of you leaves behind." .

(Bukhan)

In spite of this when the Prophet declared that he would collect the Zakat, he treated leniently and with softness the greed of men to hoard money and tackled them with great dexterity. He said:

"Soon to you will come the collectors of Zakat. When they come, welcome them. Give them full liberty to collect whatever they want. If they act justly, they will do good to themselves. And if they are unjust, its evil will be on them. Keep them pleased, for the payment of your zakat will be completed by their pleasure, and they should pray in your favor."

(Abu Daud)

If a man is successful in removing the obstructions that miserliness and narrow-mindedness place in the path of righteous feelings, then it is a perfect achievement in the eyes of Islam. Ordinarily a man is hopeful about life, and his relationship with it is strong and firm, provided he is healthy and energetic and courageous about future. At such a time man spends his money moderately and he is always thinking of increasing his wealth, so that he may be reassured about his future and that of his children. If in these circumstance~ a man controls all the factors, and keeps his hands open, spends his money open-heartedly and generously, he neither worries about poverty or want, nor is he afraid about his ruin, then such a man performs the act of great good. One man went to the Prophet and asked him:

"O Messenger of Allah! What charity is the best reward-winning ?" The Prophet said: "That you give in charity, although you may be healthy and in need of money; you may be afraid of getting poor so also you may be hopeful of getting wealth and being free from want. Let it not happen that you should go on postponing to give in charity, till your last breath, then you start making a will to give this much in charity to this man and that much to that man."

(Bukhari)

"If you give charity openly even so it is good, but if you give it secretly to the needy, it is much better for you, and He will/ remove some of your ill- deeds. And Allah is well aware of what you do."

(Baqarah : 271)

"If you loan to Allah a beautiful loan , He will double it to your (credit), and He* will *grant forgiveness* ; *for Allah is most Ready to appreciate (service), Most Forbearing,-Knower of what is hidden and what is open, Exalted* in *Might, Full of Wisdom."

***(Taghabun* : 17, 18)**

When a man commits a sin and he realizes that there has arisen distance between him and his Lord, then the thing that brings back cleanness, light and gets him a shelter under the benevolence and pleasure of his Lord is spending his most loved wealth and property in the cause of Allah, and he should gladden the hearts of the poor and the needy with its help, and should try to achieve rank before the Most Gracious Being. Hazrat Abu Zar has narrated that the Prophet has said:

“There was a worshipper in the Bani Israil, who had worshipped Allah in a monastery for sixty years. One day there was rainfall and the whole area became green. When he saw from his hillside-monastery he felt-would it that he went down in the valley and recited Allah's praises and collected more virtue. Then he went down from the monastery. He had one or two loaves. In the meanwhile he met a woman, and talked to her and the woman also enjoyed, and suddenly he covered the woman and then slumber overtook him.

Then he came for taking a bath to a lake, and a beggar asked him for alms. The monk then gave him both the loaves, and then he suddenly died. ! His sixty years' worshipping was weighed against the act of illegal sex, then the scale of the sin was heavier. Then in the scale of his virtue the two loaves were put, then the scale of the virtue became heavier, and he achieved salvation."

(Ibn Habban)

The effect of and the role that charity and generosity play in salvation and deliverance can be found in the best example that Allah taught to His Prophet so that he may convey it to his followers:

"I command you to give charity. Its example is like that of a man who has been held by his enemies, his hands have been tied to his neck, and he has been drawn near with the intention of being beheaded; suddenly he inquires of the possibility of saving his life by giving money. Then he began giving whatever valuable things-of little or more value- that he had,till he was able to get himself free."

(Hakim)

Zakat, charity and other generous acts are of great importance in this life and in the Hereafter. On its basis alone a Muslim's relationship with his religion either becomes strong or weak!. There is nothing more depriving than miserliness in paying others' dues and nursing misgivings against God. And there is nothing more helpful for success and glory than confidence in Allah's favors and a man's charity and generosity.

Allah's Messenger has said:

"The acts of righteousness and virtue save a man from the adverse consequences of the wicked acts. The charity that is given unobtrusively cools down Allah's anger, and kindness to kinsmen increases a man's age."

(Tibrani)

Another tradition has it :

"Arrange for the cleanness by taking zakat out of your wealth. Arrange for the treatment of your sick by giving in charity, and fight the waves of adversity by praying to God meekly and humbly."

(Abu Daud)

The heaviest blow to Satan, the most successful method to counter his tricks and the greatest shield against his distrusts is that man should give his wealth in charity, and spend his money in the cause of Allah. For this reason the devil inspires man to be weak and narrow-minded so that he may be prevented from giving generously and be involved in the entanglements of the material world:

"The devil threatens you with poverty and bids you to lewd conduct. Al/ah promises you His forgive- ness and bounties. And Allah is AI/-Embracing, AI/. Knowing."

***(Baqarah..* 268)**

It is mentioned in the *hadith* :

"When a man decides to give something in charity, a group of seventy devils clings to him and tries to put him off it."

(Ahmed)

When a man distributes his salary or allots it to different items of expenditure, be allots its major portion to such items as are perishable. He thinks of them as if they are the dues from which there is no escape. Islam has informed that a man may consider the expenditure on his food and medicine as on perishable items, but the wealth which he spends in the cause of Allah is such that never perishes.

Hazrat Ayesha narrates that they slaughtered a goat, and the Prophet asked:

"How much of its flesh has remained ?" They replied: "Nothing remained except the shoulder piece." The Prophet said: "Everything has remained except the shoulder piece."

(Tirmizi)

This *hadith* is in accord with these words of Allah: ***"Whatever is with you is perishable, and whatever is with Allah is permanent."***

(Nahl.. 96)

In a *hadith-Qudsi* it is written:

"O son of Adam! Spend your treasure in the cause of Allah. With me there is no fear of its getting burnt, drowned or stolen. In its place whatever you would need, I will give it to you."

(Baihaqui)

Philanthropy-means to Increase wealth

Sometimes a thought enters the mind that charity reduces the wealth, and brings a man nearer to poverty, and takes away from him that peace and re-assurance that is available to him under the shadow of wealth.

Such a thought is generated by Satan, who puts it into the minds of the hoarders of low and mean nature.

The fact is that charity is the means of nourishment and development. Donation of wealth is a long and wide road. A man who spends the gifts of Allah generously with his two hands, his hands are always full with the gifts of Allah. He is always surrounded by the! favors and blessings of Allah.

In a *hadilh* it is mentioned:

"There are three men about whom I can take an oath. No man's wealth can be reduced by charity. Any man who shows patience in the face of oppression, Allah honors him. And a man who opens the door to begging, Allah opens on him the door of poverty and want."

(Ibn Majah)

Man should display charity and generosity and should try to fill up the gaps found in society. Those poor and needy persons who may come to him for succors should not be returned by him disappointed, but instead he should satisfy them and should deal with them in such a way that he himself reaps rich benefits for the next world.

If today a little is spent in charity, tomorrow or day-after-tomorrow great advantages will accrue from that.

Allah has termed this generosity or donation as "excellent loan,' which will be repaid in increased quantities, not two or three times-but many more times. He has encouraged His slaves to spend money in His cause and has very clearly informed them that this spending in the cause of Allah enables them to deservingly get limitless favors and blessings of Allah, which are everlasting.

It is mentioned in a *hadith Qudsi:*

"O My slave! spend, spend, it is your duty to spend. Allah's hand is full. The charity of the day and night cannot reduce it. What do you think, how much has He spent since He created the earth and the heavens ? He never closed His hands, when His throne was on the water, in His hands was the balance which went down and went up."

(Bukhari)

Allah says:

"And whatever you spend (for good) He replaces it. And He is the Best of Providers."

***(Saba:* 39)**

Spenders in the cause of Allah remain in his sight and in his shelter in both the states of plenty and adversity. The angel sent *Darud* on them, and wish for increase in their wealth. As regards those who hoard money very miserly, they wish their loss and ruin. And will they remain with their wealth or will the wealth remain with them for all time ? The wealth has come to us from others, and will again go to others. Then why this pride and conceit about it? And for this reason, why should one forget his position and manners?

The things with which man is attached in this world, will be left by him for the real inheritor of those things, and he will appear before his Lord in such a condition that he would have no wealth nor would he enjoy any rank or position. He will be totally empty-handed, as he had first come to the world. The wealth and property about which he had acted miserly will become a load in his neck on the Day of Judgment. And it is not surprising because Allah will take revenge on such persons who forgot these realities and lived in this world unmindful of their duties. The only thought that troubled them was that whether a thing was beneficial for them or not. They were thoroughly self-centered and in their selfishness they forgot what was really good for them.

Allah's Messenger says:

"Every morning two angels come down to earth. One of them says: 'O Allah! Give full recompense to the spender (for good cause).' The other one says: 'O Allah! Ruin and destroy the miser', "

(Muslim)

Remove Poverty Movement

A man is greedy for wealth because he wants that he should leave behind him plenty of wealth and property for his children, so that they may be safe and secure after him. This is a good and virtuous intention. Islam considers it a duty of a Muslim that he should take care of his family and dependents, and keep them away from want and penury. If Islam wants you to be helpful in removing poverty and want from the homes of other, it also dislikes you to bring poverty and want in your homes.

It is mentioned in the *hadith* :

"To leave your inheritors rich and wealthy is much better than leaving them poor and needy, and being forced to beg before other."

(Bukhari)

Provision for the children and a guarantee for their future are duties of accepted importance. But how can it be proper if a man stakes his religion and character after these things It is sheer foolishness if a man sacrifices his position, decency and Allah's pleasure only for the purpose of leaving his income for his children.

Islam shows that like all other good things a man's wealth and children are a trial for him. If he is entangled in their love and forgets his duties and does not offer the expected sacrifices, then these good things and gifts become a trouble for him, nay, they become more dangerous and destructive.

"0 you who believe ! Truly, among your wives and your children are (some that are) enemies to yourselves : so beware of them! But if you forgive and overlook, and cover up (their faults), verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. Your riches and your children may be but a trial: but in the presence of Allah, is the highest reward."

***(Taghabun:* 14, 15)**

Yea, the man who does not go to *jihad,* because he likes the proximity of his wife, or the man who restrains his band from giving in charity because he wants to save his wealth for saving more and more for his children, be is showing ungratefulness to Allah for the good things of life that He has provided, and he thinks that they are really 'gifts' while actually they are a trial for him.

Khaula Bint Hakim says:

"One day the Prophet came out carrying his grandchild, and he was saying: 'You (children) become the means of miserliness, cowardice, ignorance and foolishness. And you are also the fragrance of Allah."

(Tirmizi)

It means that the person who preferred to be a miser, coward and fool on account of his child, he was in a loss, and a person who paid the dues of Allah and His slaves, he became successful.

However, being niggardly in paying the dues and for hoarding for the children, a man's poverty and need do not end, it also does not guarantee his becoming a wealthy person; and such a man will not be able to proffer any excuse which will be acceptable.

Abdullah bin Masood narrates that the Prophet PBUH said:

"Allah has blessed two types of persons with plenty of wealth, property, and children. He will ask the persons of one of these groups: 'O Such and Such man I' He will reply: 'We are present, O our Lord! we are present.' He will ask: 'What have you done with the wealth and property with which I had blessed you ?' The slave will reply: 'That I have left for my sons, for 1 was afraid of his poverty'. The Lord will say: 'If you know the reality you will laugh less and cry more. The thing which you fear, I have sent it down on them."

He will ask another person : 'O Such and such man I' He will reply: 'I am present, O My Lord! I am present.' He will ask: 'Had I not blessed you with plenty of wealth and property ?' The slave will reply: 'Certainly, my Lord!' He will ask: 'What have you done with those blessings ?' He will reply: 'I spent it in the path of your obedience, and I left my children to your Mercy, Kindness and Benevolence.' Then God will say: 'Listen, If you know the reality, you will laugh more and cry less. The things on which you relied, I provided him with them'. "

(Tibrani)

Islam advises that man should first be kind to himself, then with his home people, then with his relatives and with all humans.

A man's being kind with his self means that he should meet all his permissible and proper needs by *halal* or permissible means, and should avoid *haram* or forbidden means. He should keep himself safe from the manifestations of poverty and starvation, for a man loses his dignity because of these conditions. The necessary standard of Muslim's honour is not maintained. But all these things should be done in between miserliness and wasteful spending. Muslims are allowed to keep so much wealth with them that it may suffice to meet their needs, and if they have not these means then they are poor and needy.

Abu Saeed Khudri narrates: .

” A man in a poor condition entered the *Masjid-i-Naba,'* (Prophet's Mosque). At that time the Prophet was commanding the people to give charity. When the people collected the donations, he gave two items of clothing to that man in poor condition. When for the second time the Prophet advised the people to give in charity, that seedy looking man threw one item of clothing. The Prophet said in anger: 'See this shabby-looking man, I had given him two pieces of clothing, and when I again advised people to give in charity, he threw his one piece.' The Prophet reproached him considerably."

(Abu Daud)

The holy Prophet wanted to remove poverty, penury and want and obscenity from society, while some people did not care whether they were moving about without clothes or without footwear. If the people of this kind consider their such appearance as a manifestation of religious teachings, then it is not correct, because Islam makes it a duty for every Muslim to strive for so much wealth as may make him able to raise his head with dignity in society.

Jabir has reported:

A man came to the Prophet with a piece of gold with him and said to the Prophet that he got it from a mine and requested him to accept it ; that it was in charity and that he had nothing else which he could give in charity. The Prophet turned his face a away. So he came from the right side, and again requested. This time also the Prophet turned his face away. So he came from the left side and pleaded. This time also the Prophet did not pay any attention. So he came from behind and repeated his request. The Prophet took it and threw it towards him so forceful that had it touched him it would have been painful

Then he said: 'Some of you come to give the entire property in charity. After this they go on begging before others, and the best charity is that which comes from a wealthy person'."

Who deserve First to Partake of your Wealth?

It is the duty of the Head of the family to find out what are the reasonable needs of his household. people, and he should meet them with generosity. It is not religiousness that a man should let his wife and children suffer for want of means and should spend his wealth for other purposes, however important they may be. Family relationships deserve more attention and preferable treatment over others.

The Prophet has said:

"One dinar is that which you spend in the cause of Allah, and one dinar is that which you spend for freeing a slave; and one dinar is that which you spend on your family. But of all these, the greatest reward will be given for the dinar which has been spent on the family."

(Muslim)

In the discussion on Sincerity this *hadith* had been quoted :

"What a Muslim spends on his family, for seeking the pleasure of Allah, is also counted as charity."

(Bukhari)

By this clear guidance Islam wants that the allotment of the expenditure should be in proportion to the benefits to society, for family is the foundation of a great society and the first brick. of its edifice. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to it first and to pay its dues fully.

In this teaching there is a warning for those who spend heartily and squander money carelessly outside their homes among their friends while at home they become a picture of poverty and helplessness.

The people who deserve more to be benefited from the excess wealth of a person are his relatives and kinsmen. It is their right that when the hand should be raised for giving in charity it should first be extended towards them. It also appeals to a sound intellect that when there are needy and poor persons in the vicinity of a person, then where is the sense in leaving them uncared for and extending the helping hand towards others?

Such an action might generate a feeling of hatred and rancor in the hearts of the deprived persons, and they may feel that the ignorance shown in their respect is with a view to harming them and putting them to great loss. And if giving of pain and dissatisfaction is done consciously, then this kind of charity becomes troublesome for the giver.

A *haditlt* has it:

“O Community of Muhammed! By the Being Who has sent me with Truth, Allah cannot accept the charity of those persons whose relatives are in want of his kindness and help, and he is distributing it among others, leaving them. By the Being in Whose power is my life, on the Day of Judgment Allah will not look at such a man."

(Tibrani)

The wife of Hazrat Abdullah bin Masood, Zainab Saqafiah says: .. Allah's Messenger bas said :

'O Group of ladies Give in charity, even if you have to sell ornaments." She says : 'I went to Abdullah bin Masood and told him: 'You are a poor man and the Prophet has asked us to give in charity. You go to the Prophet and ask him whether this thing can be an alternative for charity, if so it is well, otherwise I will give in charity to others instead of to you.' Abdullah bin Masood said: 'You go and ask him.'

She says that on her way to see the Prophet, she met a woman from Ansar, who was also troubled with the same thoughts. They went together. As a precautionary measure they had to stop outside his room. When Hazrat Bilal came out of the room, she said to him: 'Go and ask the Prophet and tell him that two women have come to ask you whether looking after the husbands and nourishing their children can be an alternative to charity or not? And do not tell him who the women are.'

She says that Bilal went in the presence of the Prophet and asked him about her problem. The Prophet asked who the women were. He answered that one was a woman from the Ansar and another was Zainab. The Prophet asked: 'Which Zainab ?' He replied: 'The wife of Abdullah bin Masood.' The Prophet said: 'These two will get the reward of the relationship and also the reward for the charity.'

(Bukbari)

Allah’s Messenger has said:

"To spend on the poor is charity, and to spend on the relative gets the reward for double charity, one is charity itself, I and another for kindness to relatives." '

(Tinnizi)

CHAPTER 16

PATIENCE

Patience is Tower of Light

"Patience is a light." (Muslim)

In the intricate paths of life when difficulties and hardships confront a man, and the darkness of adversities and suffering becomes long, it is patience only that acts like a light for a Muslim, that keeps him safe from wandering here and there, and saves him from the muddy mire of disappointment, desperation and frustration. Patience is such a basic quality that a Muslim needs it to shape his life in this world and in the next. On this basis only he should attend to all his work. He should make it a torchlight for guiding his way, else he will be defeated in the field of life. He should prepare his self to tolerate the hardships and difficulties, and should not holler or raise hell. He should not sit waiting for the results, however late that may take. He should not run away from responsibilities, whatever they may be. No doubts and misgivings, no hardship of trouble should prompt his intellect to indulge in violence. He should have plenty of self-confidence. He should not be frightened by the dark clouds appearing on the horizon of life, even if they may be appearing continually, nay, he should be fully sure that these clouds of adversities and hardships will disappear, and the clear and bright atmosphere of success and glory will appear again. Therefore, the demand of wisdom and far-sightedness is that its coming should be awaited with patience, peace and conviction.

The Almighty God has stressed this point sufficiently that no man can escape tests and trials, so that man may be alert and ready at the time when these hardship and difficulties descend on him, and he should not be frightened by these heavenly and earthly tribulations, and need not be disappointed and disheartened.

"And verily We shall try you ill till We know those of you who still hard (in the cause of Allah) and the steadfast, and till We test your record."

(*Muhammed:* 31)

The poet has expressed the same idea in these words:

"We had anticipated the hardships of the night before their coming. So when they descended, there was no addition to our knowledge."

Undoubtedly if accidents and debacles are faced with a clear sight and full preparations, it will prove advantageous for man and this will help in stabilizing and consolidating his position.

The two Pillars of Patience

Patience relies on two important realities. The first reality is concerned with the nature of this worldly life. Its details are: Allah has not made this world a house of peace and satisfaction or of rewards and recompense, but He has made it a house of trials. The time that a man spends in this world is really a time for unending experiences. He comes out of one trial in order to undergo another trial which is harder and different from the one through which he has already

passed, that is man is tested once by one thing and again by its opposite, as iron is first heated in the fire and then it is put in the water. Similarly man is tested by favorable as well as opposing means.

When Allah blessed Hazrat Sulaiman with a grand and magnificent empire, he knew about these natural laws of the world. He had said:

"This is of the bounty of my Lord, that He may try me whether I give thanks or am ungrateful. Whoever gives thanks, he only gives thanks for (the good of) his Own soul,' and whoever is ungrateful (is ungrateful only to his own soul's hurt). For surely, my Lord is Absolute in independence, Bountiful."

(Nahl: 40)

The causes of trial through sadness and hardships are vague and unfixed. However, we can understand them properly by the example of the soldiers fighting in the battlefield. In the battlefield some groups are made to fight till they have to lose their valuable lives, so that the lives of other groups may be saved. The security of other sections is dependent on the remaining groups being made to fight in new battles. This strategy is followed in the wider interest of the country and for- greater advantages, by the great leadership of the army In this fighting the life of a man has no importance, because the problem is much wider.

Same is the position of luck or fate. A certain man is put to different kinds of trials, till he falls down defeated, as there is no other way for him, except that he should greet the hardship that has arrived with patience and submission. Since this life is a testing ground, we should strive hard for success in it.

What is the trial or examination of life? It is not words that they can be written, or talks to which attention may be paid. The questions of the examination are these hardships and difficulties which confront a man, and which open before him the path of fright, terror, and frustration. Examination is the name of the anti-reality defects which prompt a man to be jealous and nourisher of rancor against his sincere friend; examination is the name of the tyrannies for which a nation occupies the place of god and the other people offer their blood as sacrifice for retrieving their usurped rights.

The history of life on this earth from the first day tin today is very sorrowful. The right thing is that man should himself make his own way in this life, and he should be sure that the way to his destination is fun of thorns and filth.

The second reality is concerned with the nature and temperament of faith.

Faith is the name of the relationship between man and his Lord. As in the relationship of men, the true friendship and sincerity can only be judged when it is confronted with unfavorable and bitter conditions, when they have to deal with the hardships brought about by the vagaries of time, and when they are surrounded by various kinds of problems. At such a time a man's real worth and sincerity is known. Exactly similar is the case of faith. To find out the truth and sincerity about faith it is necessary that a Muslim be tried, he should be put in the crucible of fire to see whether he comes out glowing like the gold or whether he will be burnt away with the impurities.

"Do ***men imagine that they will be left (at ease) because they say, We believe, and will not be tested with affliction? Verily, We tested those who were before you. Thus Allah*** **knows** ***those who are sincere, and*** **knows** ***those who feign.***

(Ankabut.. **2, 3)**

Undoubtedly, Allah's knowledge covers all manifest and concealed matters, and from this examination there will be no addition to His knowledge, because He knows all the conditions from the beginning till the end. The Divine knowledge cannot be made a basis for man's reckoning. His reckoning will be on the basis of his own personal deeds. If some criminals deny their crimes, then on the Day of Judgment in what way proof can be brought against them except by putting them to trial in this world and man's own parts of the body may give evidence against him?

About such people Quran has to say this:

“ *And on the Day We gather them together.. We shall say to those who ascribed partners (to Allah).. Where are* (now) *those partners of your make-believe ? Then they will have no contention except that they will say.. By Allah, our Lord, we never were idolaters. See how they lie against themselves, and (how) the thing which they devised has failed them* /"

(*AI-An'am..* 22-24)

How can the reckoning of such criminals be taken in the light of the Divine knowledge? *Their* justifiable retribution will be proper only when all their misdeeds are placed before them. Their efforts and striving to create corruption and mischief among others and all their misdeeds will be repeated before them.

On these two bases the foundation of patience has been kept. And for this reason religion demands it, but he who shuts his eyes from realities by force of his nature is dumbfounded when he has to face hardships and his hands and feet become inactive when he has to fight difficulties. His rashness dislikes waiting and patience and he is unable to tolerate it, Therefore, when anything untoward happens, or he has to suffer some kind of failure, or when he meets with an accident, the earth with all its great vastness becomes narrow for him, and the conditions become exasperating for him. He wants to come out of these conditions in the twinkling of an eye, but it is obvious that in this effort he will not ; be successful for it is against the temperament of the world and the religion, It is proper for a Muslim to learn to be patient and to wait and to wait for long.

"Man is made of haste. I shall show' you my signs, but ask Me not to hasten,"

(*AI-Ambiya..* 31)